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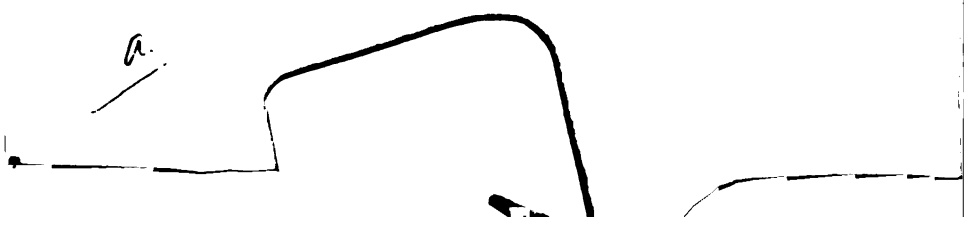

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The Tapu of Banderah

I

THE "STARLIGHT"

AS the rising sun had just begun to pierce the misty tropic haze of early dawn, a small, white-painted schooner of ninety or a hundred tons burden was bearing down upon the low, densely-wooded island of Mayou, which lies between the coast of south-east New Guinea and the murderous Solomon Group—the grave of the white man in Melanesia.

The white population of Mayou was not large, for it consisted only of an English missionary and his wife—who was, of course, a white woman—a German trader named Peter Schwartzkoff and his native wife; an English trader named Charlie Blount, with his two half-caste sons and daughters; and an American trader and ex-whaler, named Nathaniel Burrowes, with his wives.

Although the island is of large extent, and of amazing fertility, the native population was at this time comparatively small, numbering only some three thousand souls. They nearly all lived at the south-west end of the island, the rendezvous of the few trading ships that visited the place. Occasionally a surveying vessel, and, at longer intervals still, a labour-recruiting ship from Hawaii or Fiji, would call. At such times the monotony of the lives of the white residents of Mayou was pleasantly broken. Once a year, too, a missionary vessel would drop anchor in the little reef-bound port, but her visit was of moment only to the Rev. Mr. Deighton, his wife, and their native converts, and the mission ship's presence in the harbour was taken no notice of by the three white traders; for a missionary ship is not always regarded by the average trader in the South Seas as a welcome visitor.

Almost with the rising of the sun the vessel had been sighted from the shore by a party of natives, who were fishing off the south end of the island, and in a few minutes their loud cries reached other natives on shore, and by them was passed on from house to house along the beach till it reached the town itself. From there, presently, came a deep sonorous shout, "*Evaka ! Evaka !*" ("A ship! A ship!"), and then they swarmed out of their thatched dwellings like bees from a hive and ran,

laughing and shouting together, down to the beach in front of the village.

As the clamour increased, the Rev. Wilfrid Deighton opened the door of his study and stepped out upon the shady verandah of the mission house, which stood upon a gentle, palm-covered rise about five hundred yards from the thickly clustering houses of the native village. He was a tall, thin man with a scanty brown beard, and his face wore a wearied, anxious expression. His long, lean body, coarse, toil-worn hands, and shabby clothing indicated, too, that the lines of the Rev. Wilfrid had not been cast in a pleasant place when he chose the wild, unhealthy island of Mayou as the field of his labours. But if he showed bodily traces of the hard, continuous toil he had undergone during the seven years' residence among the people of Mayou, his eye was still full of the fire of that noble missionary spirit which animated the souls of such earnest men as Moffat and Livingstone, and Williams of Erromanga, and Gordon of Khartoum. For he was an enthusiast, who believed in his work; and so did his wife, a pretty, faded little woman of thirty, with a great yearning to save souls, though at times she longed to return to the comforts and good dinners of semi-civilisation in other island groups nearer the outside world she had been away from so long.

The missionary stepped out on the verandah,

and shaded his eyes from the glare with his rough, sun-tanned hands, as he looked seaward at the advancing vessel. Soon his wife followed him and placed her hand on his shoulder.

"What is it, Wilfrid? Surely not the *John Hunt*. She is not due for months yet."

"Not her, certainly, Alice," he answered, "and not a trading vessel either, I should think. She looks more like a yacht. Perhaps she may be a new man-of-war schooner. However, we will soon see. Put on your hat, my dear, and let us go down to the beach. Already Blount, Schwartzkoff, and Burrowes have gone; and it certainly would not do for me to remain in the background when the newcomers land.

Mrs. Deighton, her pale face flushing with gentle excitement at the prospect of meeting Europeans, quickly retired to her room, and making a rapid toilette, rejoined her husband, who, white umbrella in hand, awaited her at the gate.

* * * * *

"Good morning, gentlemen," said the reverend gentleman, a few minutes later, as, accompanied by Mrs. Deighton, he joined the three white traders, "what vessel is it? Have you any idea?"

"None at all," answered Blount, with a short nod to Mr. Deighton, but lifting his leaf hat to his wife, "we were just wondering ourselves. Doesn't look like a trader—more like a gunboat."

Meantime the schooner had worked her way in through the passage, and, surrounded by a fleet of canoes, soon brought up and anchored. Her sails were very quickly handled, then almost as soon as she swung to her anchor a smart, white-painted boat was lowered, and the people on shore saw the crew haul her up to the gangway ladder.

Presently a white man, who, by his dress, was an officer of the ship, followed by another person in a light tweed suit and straw hat, entered the boat, which then pushed off and was headed for the shore. As she approached nearer, the traders and the missionary could see that the crew were light-skinned Polynesians, dressed in blue cotton jumpers, white duck pants, and straw hats. The officer—who steered with a steer-oar—wore a brass-bound cap and brass-buttoned jacket, and every now and then turned to speak to the man in the tweed suit, who sat smoking a cigar beside him.

"By jingo! she's a yacht, I believe," said Charlie Blount, who had been keenly watching the approaching boat; "I'm off. I don't want to be bothered with people of that sort—glorified London drapers, who ask 'Have you—ah—got good shooting heah?'"

Then turning on his heel, he raised his hat to Mrs. Deighton, nodded to the other white men, and sauntered along the beach to his house.

"I guess Blount's kinder set again meetin' people

like these," said Burrowes, nodding in the direction of the boat and addressing himself to Mr. and Mrs. Deighton. "Reckon they might be some all-powerful British swells he knew when he was one himself. Guess they won't scare *me* a cent's worth."

"Id was brober dadt he should veel so," remarked the German; "if some Yerman shentlemans vas to come here und zee me dresd like vom dirty sailor mans, den I too vould get me home to mein house und say nodings."

"My friends," said Mr. Deighton, speaking reproachfully, yet secretly pleased at Blount's departure, "no man need feel ashamed at meeting his countrymen on account of the poverty of his attire; I am sure that the sight of an English gentleman is a very welcome one to me and Mrs. Deighton."

"Wal," said Burrowes with easy but not offensive familiarity, "I guess, parson, thet you and Mrs. Deighton hed better form yourselves inter a committee of welcome, and tell them so; I ain't much in the polite speechifying line myself, neither is 'Schneider' here," nodding at the German, "and you can sling in somethin' ornymental 'bout me bein' the representative of the United States—a gentleman a-recrootin' of his health in the South Sea Islands doorin' a perlitercal crisis in Washington."

By this time the boat had run her bows up on to the white, sandy beach, and the straw-hatted, tweed-suited gentleman jumped lightly out. Taking off his hat with a graceful, circular sweep, which included every one on the beach, white and native, he said with languid politeness—

"Good-day, gentlemen; I scarcely hoped to have the pleasure of meeting Europeans at this place—and certainly never imagined that pleasure would be enhanced by the presence of a lady," he added as he caught sight of Mrs. Deighton standing apart some little distance from the others.

"I am pleased to meet you, sir," said the missionary, constituting himself spokesman for the others; "you are welcome, sir, very welcome to Mayou, and to anything that it lies in our power to furnish you with for your — schooner, or should I say yacht, for such, by her handsome appearance, I presume she is."

The visitor, who was a handsome, fair-haired man, with a blonde moustache and blue eyes, bowed his thanks, and then said, "May I have the honour to introduce myself. My name is De Vere."

"And I am the Rev. Wilfrid Deighton, missionary in charge of this island. My two——" (here he hesitated a moment before the next word) "friends are Mr. Peter Schwartzkoff and Mr. Nathaniel Burrowes."

"Delighted to meet you," said Mr. de Vere, bowing politely to the lady, but extending a white, shapely hand to the men; "and now I must tell you that I shall be very glad to avail myself, Mr. Deighton, of your kind offer. We are in want of water, and anything in the way of vegetables, etcetera, that we can get. We intend, however, to stay here a few days and refit. Having been in very bad weather coming through the southern part of the Solomon Group we must effect repairs."

"Might I inquire, mister," asked Burrowes, "ef your vessel is a trader, or jest a pleasure schooner, as the parson here says?"

"Mr. Deighton is quite correct," said Mr. de Vere, with another graceful bow; "the *Starlight* is a yacht. I can quite understand your not being able to make her out. She was originally built for the navy as a gunboat, but was sold in Sydney, after some years' service. I bought her and had her altered into a yacht to cruise about these delightful and beautiful South Sea Islands. My friend, the Honourable John Morcombe-Lycett, accompanies me. Our English yachting experience had much to do with our determination to make a cruise down here. In fact," and here Mr. de Vere showed his white, even teeth in a smile, and stroked his drooping blonde moustache, "we left London with the intention of chartering a vessel

in Sydney for a cruise among the islands. Mr. Morcombe-Lycett is, however, very unwell to-day, and so has not landed, but here am I ; and I am very happy indeed to make your acquaintance."

Then, turning towards the boat, he called out to the officer who had brought him, " Come ashore for me at dinner-time, Captain Sykes."

II

A DIFFERENCE OF OPINION

A few hours later Mr. de Vere was on very friendly terms with Mr. and Mrs. Deighton, who had carried him off to the mission house, after the boat returned to the schooner. Before he accompanied them, however, he told Messrs. Burrowes and Schwartzkoff, as he shook hands, that he would not fail to visit them later on in the day at their respective houses. And both Peter, and the American, who on any other occasion would have been justly indignant at any white visitor not a missionary himself foregoing, even for a short time, the pleasure of their society for that of a " blarsted missionary," shook hands with him most vigorously, and said they would be proud to see him. Then they hurried off homewards.

Peter's house and trading station lay midway

between that of Charlie Blount and the American's, but instead of making for his own place, Peter, to the surprise of Blount, who was now standing at his door watching them, went inside Burrowes' house.

"That's d—d curious, now," said Blount, in English, to one of his half-caste daughters, a girl of eighteen; "those two fellows hate each other like poison. I've never known the Dutchman go into the Yankee's house, or the Yankee go into his, for the past two years, and here they are now as thick as thieves! I wonder what infernal roguery they are up to?"

Charlie Blount's amazement was perfectly natural. The German and American did dislike each other most intensely. Neither of them had lived so long on Mayou as Blount, but each was trying hard to work the other man off the island by accusing him to the natives of cheating them. As a matter of fact they were both scoundrels, but Banderah, the chief of Mayou, who was fond of white men, managed to keep a hollow peace between them. *He* was perfectly well aware that both of them cheated himself and his people, but as long as their cheating was practised moderately he did not mind. In Blount, however, he had the fullest confidence, and this good feeling was shared with him by every native on the island.

* * * * *

Perhaps, had Blount been a witness of what

occurred when the boat landed, his suspicion of his fellow-traders' honesty would have been considerably augmented. For while the missionary and Mr. de Vere were bandying compliments, the German and American were exchanging signs with the officer who was in charge of the boat, and whom De Vere addressed as "Captain Sykes." The American, indeed, had started down the beach to speak to him, when Mr. de Vere called out to him to return to the ship, and Captain Sykes, with a gesture signifying that he would see Burrowes later on, swung round the boat's head and gave the word to his Kanaka crew to give way. As if quite satisfied with this dumb promise, the American returned to the group he had just left, and then the moment the missionary, Mrs. Deighton, and De Vere had gone, he and the German started off together.

The moment they entered the American's house, Burrowes sat down on the table and the German on a gin case.

"Wal, Dutchy," said Burrowes, looking keenly at his companion, "I reckon you know who the almighty swell in the brass-bound suit is, hey?"

"Yaw," replied Schwartzkoff, "it is Bilker, und I thought he was in brison for ten years mit."

"Wal, that's true enough that he did get ten years. But that's six years ago, an' I reckon they've let him out. Public feelin' in Australia

agin nigger catchin' ain't very strong; an' I reckon he's got out after doin' five or six years."

"Dot is so," asserted the German; and then he leaned forward, "but vat vas he doing here in dis fine, swell schooner mit?"

"That's jest what you and me is goin' to find out, Dutchy. An' I guess that you an' me *can* find out darned easy. Bilker ain't going to fool *me;* if he's on to anything good, I guess I'm going to have a cut in."

"Vell, ve see by und by, ven he comes ashore. Von ding, I dells you, mine friend. Dot fine shentleman don't know vat you und me knows about Captain Bilker."

The American gave an affirmative wink, and then going to a rude cupboard he took out a bottle of gin and a couple of tin mugs.

"Look hyar, Peter, I guess you and me's goin' to do some business together over this schooner, so let's make friends."

"I vas agreeable," said the German with alacrity, rising from his seat and accepting the peace-offering. He nodded to Burrowes and tossed it off.

* * * * *

By lunch-time Mr. Morcombe-Lycett had been brought ashore and had accepted Mr. Deighton's invitation to remain for the night. He was a well-dressed, good-looking man of about thirty-five, and

was, so Mr. Deighton sympathisingly announced to his wife, suffering from a touch of malarial fever, which a little quinine and nursing would soon put right. Mr. Deighton himself, by the way, was suffering from the same complaint.

At noon, as Charlie Blount was walking past Burrowes' house, he was surprised to see that the German was still there. He was about to pass on —for although on fairly friendly terms with the two men, he did not care for either of them sufficiently well to enter their houses often, although they did his—when the American came to the door and asked him to come in and take a nip.

"Are you going to board the schooner?" asked Burrowes, as Blount came in and sat down.

"No, I'm going down to Lak-a-lak. I've got some natives cutting timber for me there, and thought I would just walk along the beach and see how they are getting on. Besides that, my little girl Nellie is there with her uncle."

"Why," said Burrowes, with genuine surprise, 'won't you go aboard and see if they have any provisions to sell? I heard you say the other day that you had quite run out of tinned meats and nearly out of coffee."

"So I have; but I don't care about going on board for all that." Then looking the two men straight in the face, he drank off the gin, set the mug down on the table, and resumed, "I saw by

my glass that that damned, cut-throat blackbirder, Bilker, is her skipper. That's enough for me. I heard that the infernal scoundrel got ten years in gaol. Sorry he wasn't hanged."

"Vy," said the German, whose face was considerably flushed by the liquor he had been drinking, "you vas in der plackpird drade yourselves von dime."

"So I was, Peter," said Blount quietly, "but *we* did the thing honestly, fairly and squarely. I, and those with me, when I was in the labour trade, never stole a nigger, nor killed one. This fellow Bilker was a disgrace to every white man in the trade. He is a notorious, cold-blooded murderer."

The conversation fell a bit flat after this, for Mr. Burrowes and Mr. Schwartzkoff began to feel uncomfortable. Six or seven years before, although then unknown to each other and living on different islands, they each had had business relations with Captain Bilker in the matter of supplying him with "cargo" during his cruises for "blackbirds," and each of them had so carried on the trade that both were ultimately compelled to leave the scene of their operations with great haste, and take up their residence elsewhere, particularly as the commander of the cruiser which arrested Captain Bilker expressed a strong desire to make their acquaintance and let them keep him company to the gallows.

"Wal," resumed the American, "I guess every man hez got his own opinions on such things. I hev mine—— Why, here's Mr. de Vere. Walk right in, sir, an' set down; and Mister Deighton, too. Howdy do, parson? I'm real glad to see you."

The moment the visitors entered Blount rose to go, but the missionary, with good-natured, blundering persistency, pressed him back, holding his hand the while.

"Mr. de Vere, this is Mr. Blount, a most excellent man, I do assure you."

"How do you do?" said Blount, taking the smiling Englishman's hand in his, but quickly dropping it. There was something in De Vere's set smile and cold, watery-blue eyes that he positively resented, although he knew not why.

However, as the somewhat dull-minded Deighton seemed very anxious for him to stay and engage in "doing the polite" to his guest, Blount resumed his seat, but did so with restraint and impatience showing strongly in his sun-burnt, resolute face. For some ten minutes or so he remained, speaking only when he was spoken to; and then he rose, and nodding a cool "good-day" to the handsome Mr. de Vere and the two traders, he strode to the door and walked out.

Before he was half-way from Burrowes' house to the mission station, he was overtaken by the Rev. Mr. Deighton.

"Mr. de Vere has gone on board again," he said in his slow, solemn way, "gone on board to get me some English papers. A most estimable and kind gentleman, Mr. Blount, an aristocrat to the backbone, but a gentleman, Mr. Blount, a gentleman above all. His visit has given me the most unalloyed——"

"He may be very kind," said Blount, "but my judgment has gone very much astray if he is what he represents himself to be."

"Mr. Blount!" and the missionary looked genuinely shocked. "You are very unjust, as well as very much in error. Mr. de Vere is a scion of one of the noblest of our many noble English families. He told me so himself."

"Ah, did he! That just confirms me in my opinion of him. Now, look here, Mr. Deighton," and his tone became slightly irritated, "I'm not surprised that this Mr. de Vere—who, whatever he is, is *not* a scion of any noble English family—should impose upon men like Burrowes and the German, but that he should impose on you does rather surprise me. And yet I don't know. It is always the way, or nearly always the way, that those whose education and intelligence should be a safeguard to them against imposture, are as often imposed upon as the ignorant and uncultured."

"Imposture, Mr. Blount! Do you mean to say——"

"I mean to say that this man De Vere with his flashy get-up and imposing name is *not* an English gentleman. He may deceive you and the men we have just left, but he doesn't deceive me. I once lived in England a long time ago, Mr. Deighton," here Blount turned his face away, and then added dreamily, "a long time, a very long time ago, and met some fairly decent people. And I no more believe that Mr. de Vere comes from a good family than I do that Nathaniel Burrowes, a low, broken-down New Orleans wharf-loafer, comes from one of the 'first families in Virginia' that American newspapers are always blathering about."

"What is wrong with him, Mr. Blount?"

"Nothing from your point of view—everything from mine. And, so far as I am concerned, I don't mean to have anything to do with these two English gentlemen and the yacht *Starlight*. Well, here we are at the mission. Good-day, Mr. Deighton; I'm going to Lak-a-lak to see how my timber-getters are doing." And with a kindly nod at the troubled missionary, the big, dark-faced trader strode along the beach alone.

III

BANDERAH

Banderah, the supreme chief of Mayou, was, *vide* Mr. Deighton's report to his clerical superiors, "a

man of much intelligence, favourably disposed to the spread of the Gospel, but, alas! of a worldly nature, and clinging for worldly reasons to the darkness." In other words, Banderah, although by no means averse to the poorer natives of the island adopting Christianity in a very free and modified form, and contributing a certain amount of their possessions to the missionary cause, was yet a heathen, and intended to remain one. For Mr. Deighton he had conceived a personal liking, mingled with a wondering and contemptuous pity. During an intertribal war he had received a bullet in his thigh, which the missionary had succeeded, after much difficulty, in extracting. Consequently, his gratitude was unlimited, and he evinced it in a very practical manner, by commanding some hundreds of his subjects to become Christians under pain of death. And, being aware that polygamy would not be tolerated by Mr. Deighton, he went a step further, and ordered all those of these forced converts who had more than one wife to send them to his own harem. This addition to his family duties, was, however, amply compensated for by the labour of the surplus wives proving useful to him on his yam and taro plantations.

In his younger days Banderah had once made a voyage to Sydney, in the service of a trading captain, one Lannigan, whose name, in those days, was a name to conjure with from one end of

Melanesia to the other, and for whose valour as a fighter and killer of men Banderah had acquired a respect he could never entertain for a missionary. This captain, however, died in Sydney, full of years and strong drink, and left the chief almost broken-hearted, to return a year later to Mayou.

In his curious, semi-savage character there were some good points, and one was that in compliance with the oft-expressed wishes and earnest entreaties of Blount and Mr. Deighton, he had agreed to put down the last remnants of cannibalism which had lingered among the coast tribes on the island down to the time of this story. And although the older men, and some of the priests of the heathen faith, had struggled against his drastic legislation, they finally gave in when Mr. Deighton, weeping tears of honest joy at such a marvellous and wholesale conversion, presented each convert with a new print shirt and a highly coloured picture of the Israelites crossing the Red Sea.

An hour after Blount had walked along the beach to Lak-a-lak, Banderah saw the captain of the schooner come ashore and walk up the path to Nathaniel Burrowes' house, where he was warmly greeted by Burrowes and the German. He remained there for nearly an hour, and then came out again, and looking about him for a few moments, made direct for Banderah's house, which

stood about three hundred yards back from that of the American trader.

When close to the chief's house the captain of the *Starlight* raised his head, and Banderah caught sight of his features and recognised him.

"How are you, Bandy?" said the seaman, walking smartly up to the chief, who was sitting on a mat inside his doorway, surrounded by a part of his harem and family, "you haven't forgotten me, have you?"

"Oh, no, sir. I no forget you," said the native, civilly enough, but without warmth. "How are you, Cap'en Bilker?"

"Sh', don't call me that, Bandy. I'm Captain Sykes now."

"Yes?" and Banderah's face at once assumed an expression of the most hopeless stupidity. "All right, Cap'en Sike. Come inside an' sit down."

"Right, my boy," said Bilker genially, fumbling in his coat pocket, and producing a large flask of rum, "I've brought you a drink, Bandy; and I want to have a yarn with you."

"All right," and taking the flask from the captain's hand without deigning to look at it, he passed it on to one of his wives. "What you want talk me about, Cap'en? You want me to get you some native for work on plantation?" and he smiled slily.

"No, no, Bandy. Nothing like that. I don't

run a labour ship now. I'm a big fellow gentleman now. I'm captain of that yacht."

The chief nodded, but said nothing. He knew Captain "Sykes" of old, and knew him to be an undoubted rascal. Indeed, about ten years before the cunning blackbirder captain had managed to take thirty of Banderah's people away in his ship without paying for them; and the moment the chief recognised the sailor he set his keen native brain to work to devise a plan for getting square with him. And he meant to take deadly vengeance.

"Banderah, old man," and the captain laid one hand on the chief's naked knee, "I meant to pay you for those men when I came back next trip. But I was taken by a man-of-war," here Bilker crossed his wrists to signify that he had been handcuffed; "taken to Sydney, put me in calaboose—ten years."

"You lie," said Banderah quietly, but with a danger spark in his eye, "man-o'-war no make you fas' for a long time after you steal my men. Plenty people tell me you make two more voyage; then man-o'-war catch you an' make you fas'."

"Don't you believe 'em, Banderah," began the ex-blackbirder, when the chief interrupted him—

"What you do with my brother?" he said suddenly; "he die too, in Fiji?"

The white man's face paled. "I don't know, Banderah. I didn't know your brother was aboard

when my mate put the hatches on. I thought he had gone ashore. I never meant to take him away to Fiji anyway."

"All right; never mind that. But what you want talk to me about?" And then, as if to put his visitor at his ease, he added, "You dam rogue, me dam rogue."

"Yes, yes," assented Captain Bilker cheerfully; "but look here now, Bandy, I'm not only going to pay you for those men I took, but give you a lot of money as well—any amount of money; make you a big, rich chief; big as Maafu Tonga.[1] But I want you to help me."

"You speak me true?" inquired the chief.

"I swear it," answered the captain promptly, extending his hand, which, however, Banderah did not appear to see.

"All right," he said presently, after a silence of a few moments; then making a sign for his women and slaves to withdraw to the further end of the room, so that their muttered talk might not disturb the white man and himself, he lit his pipe and said, "Go on, tell me what you want me to do, Cap'en."

"Look," said the ex-blackbirder, laying a finger on the chief's arm and speaking in a low voice, "these two white men on board the yacht have got any amount of money, gold, sovereigns—boxes

[1] Maafu of Tonga, the once dreaded rival of King Cacobau of Fiji. He died in 1877.

and boxes of it. They stole it; I know they stole it, although I didn't see them do it."

Banderah nodded his huge, frizzy head. "I savee. These two fellow rogue, all same you an' me."

"See, now, look here, Banderah. I mean to have that gold, and I want you to help me to get it. As soon as these men on board are dead I will give you a thousand golden sovereigns—five thousand dollar. Then I'll go away in the schooner. Now, listen, and I'll tell you how to do it. The Yankee and Peter are going to help."

Then Captain Bilker, *alias* Sykes, unfolded his plan as follows: Banderah was to entice De Vere and his friend some miles into the interior, where there was a large swamp covered with wild-fowl. Here they were to be clubbed by Banderah and his people, and the bodies thrown into the swamp. Then Bilker, accompanied by Schwartzkoff and Burrowes, were to go on board the schooner and settle the mate and the white steward.

"How much sovereign you goin' to give Peter and Missa Burrowes?" asked Banderah.

"Five hundred," answered Bilker; "five hundred between them. But I will give you a thousand."

"You no 'fraid man-o'-war catch you by and by?" inquired Banderah.

"No. Who's going to tell about it? You and your people won't."

"What 'bout Missa Blount? What 'bout mission'ry?"

Bilker grinned savagely. "Peter and Burrowes say they will kill Blount if I give them another five hundred sovereigns."

"What 'bout mission'ry and mission'ry woman?"

For a moment or two Bilker, crime-hardened villain as he was, hesitated. Then he raised his head and looked into the dark face of the native chief. Its set, savage expression gave him confidence.

"Plenty missionaries get killed. And, all the man-o'-war captains know that the Mayou bushmen[1] are very savage. Some day—in about a week after I have gone away in the schooner, you will take the missionary and his wife to the little bush town, that Peter and Burrowes tell me he goes to sometimes. They will sleep there that night. You and some of your people will go with them and sleep in the same house with them. You do that sometimes, Banderah, eh?"

"Yes, sometimes."

This was perfectly true. The bush tribes on Mayou, although at war with Banderah and his coast tribes, yet occasionally met their foes in an amicable manner at a bush village called Rogga, which had been for many decades a neutral

[1] "Bushmen," a term applied to natives living in the interior of the Melanesian Islands.

ground. Here Banderah and his people, carrying fish, tobacco, and bamboos filled with salt water,[1] would meet small parties of bush people, who, in exchange for the commodities brought by Banderah, would give him yams, hogs, and wild pigeons. At several of these meetings Mr. Deighton had been present, in the vain hope that he might establish friendly relations with the savage and cannibal people of the interior.

"Well," resumed the ruffian, "you will sleep at Rogga with the missionary and his wife. In the morning, when you and your people awake, the missionary and his wife will be dead. Then you will hurry to this place; you will go on board the man-of-war and tell the captain that the bad bushmen killed them when they were asleep."

"I savee. Everybody savee Mayou man-a-bush like kill white men."

"That's it, Bandy. No one will say you did it."

"What 'bout Peter an' Burrowes? Perhaps by and by those two fellow get mad with me some day, and tell man-o'-war I bin kill three white man and one white woman."

"Banderah," and Bilker slapped him on the shoulder, "you're a damned smart fellow! There's no mistake about that. Now look here, I want

[1] Having no salt, the bush tribes of Melanesia, who dare not visit the coast, buy salt water from the coast tribes. They meet a a spot which is always sacredly kept as a neutral ground.

you to get another thousand sovereigns—the thousand I am going to give to Burrowes and Peter. And after the man-a-bush have killed the missionary and his wife, they are coming down to the beach one night soon after, and will kill the two white men. Then there will be no more white men left, and you'll be the biggest chief in the world—as big as Maafu Tonga."

A curious smile stole over the grim features of the chief.

"By God! Cap'en, you savee too much; you dam fine man altogether."

"Well, look here now, Banderah. Are you going to do it?"

"Yes, I do it right enough."

"When?"

"To-mollow."

"To-morrow will do. And, look here, Bandy, I'm going to give you ten sovereigns each for the men I took away from you."

"All right," answered the chief, "now you go away. I want go and look out for some good men come along me to-mollow."

"Right you are, Banderah. Take plenty good men. You know what to do—white men walk along swamp to shoot duck, then *one*, *two*," and Captain Bilker made a motion with his right hand that was perfectly comprehensible to the chief.

Banderah sat perfectly quiet on his mat and

watched the captain return to Burrowes' house, from where a short time after he emerged, accompanied by his two fellow-conspirators. Then the three of them hailed the schooner. A boat put off and took them on board.

* * * * *

An hour or two later Blount returned along the beach from Lak-a-lak, and walked slowly up the path to his house. Just as he entered the door the sounds of revelry came over to him from the schooner, whose lights were beginning to glimmer through the quick-falling darkness of the tropic night. Some one on board was playing an accordion, and presently he caught the words of a song—

> "Remember, too, the patriots' gore
> That flecked the streets of Baltimore;
> Maryland, my Maryland."

"Burrowes only sings that when he's very drunk," he said to himself, as he sat down to drink a cup of coffee brought to him by his eldest daughter Taya. "No doubt he and that anointed sweep Bilker are having a very happy time together."

"Father," said the girl in the native tongue, as he put down his cup, "Banderah is here. He came but now, and will not come inside, but waits for thee in the copra-house, lest he be seen talking to thee."

"What the devil is wrong?" muttered Blount, as without waiting to touch the coffee prepared for him he went outside to the copra-house.

In half an hour he and the native chief came out together, and as they stood for a minute in the broad streak of light that streamed out from the lamp on the table in the big room, Taya, who sat in the doorway, saw her father's face was set and stern-looking.

"Shed thou no blood, Banderah," he said in the native tongue, "not even that of these two dogs who have eaten and drunk in my house for four years."

"Challi,[1] that is hard. Already are my people thirsty for the blood of this dog of a captain—he who stole thirty and one of my people. And because of my brother, who was stolen with them, have I promised them vengeance. But the other two who are with him on the ship I will spare."

"As you will. And as for these two dogs who have planned to kill me, with them I shall deal myself. If, when the schooner saileth away from here, these men go not with her, then shall I shoot them dead."

"Good," and then grasping the white man's hand, the chief pressed his nose to his, and vanished in the darkness.

[1] Charlie.

IV

"DEATH TO THEM BOTH!"

Early on the following morning Messrs. de Vere and Morcombe-Lycett — the latter being now quite recovered — informed Mr. and Mrs. Deighton that, having heard from the two traders there was good shooting at the big swamp, they were going there under the guidance of Banderah and a party of natives; and shortly after breakfast the chief, accompanied by a number of his people, appeared.

"I will send with you two of my best men," said Mr. Deighton, indicating a couple of his pet converts, who stood by dressed for the occasion in white starched shirts and black coats, but minus trousers, of which garments the pet converts had divested themselves, knowing that they should have to wade through the swamp.

But suddenly, to the missionary's astonishment, Banderah, with a savage look, bade them stay where they were. He had, he said, plenty of men, and did not need Mr. Deighton's servants.

Presently the two yachting gentlemen, arrayed in a very stylish sporting get-up, appeared with their breach-loaders and cartridge-belts, and waving their hands gracefully to the missionary and his

wife, disappeared with Banderah and his dark-skinned companions into the dense tropical jungle, the edge of which was within a very short distance of the mission station.

For about an hour the Honourable Morcombe-Lycett and Mr. de Vere, with Banderah leading the way, walked steadily onward through the jungle. Not a word was spoken among the natives who followed close at their heels, and Banderah himself, in answer to their frequent questions, replied only by monosyllables.

At last they came out of the stifling heat of the thick jungle, and saw before them a great reedy swamp, the margin fringed by a scanty growth of cocoanut and pandanus palms. Out upon the open patches of water, here and there showing upon the broad expanse of the swamp, they saw large flocks of wild duck feeding and swimming about, betraying not the slightest fear at their approach.

"By Jove, Baxter," said Mr. de Vere to his friend, "looks good enough, doesn't it? I wonder if these blasted niggers will go in for us."

"Of course they will. But let us have a drink first. Here, you, bring us that basket. I wonder what sort of tucker old Godliness has given us. He's not a bad sort of an ass. His wife, too, isn't bad."

"Bah," and Mr. de Vere twirled his long, yellow moustache, "you're always finding out something

nice in the face of every woman you come across. Wait until we get up to Japan ; then you can amuse yourself with a new type of woman. Be a bit of a change for you after the Melbourne and Sydney peroxided-hair beauties. Here, nigger, give me that corkscrew."

"I say, Dalton," suddenly remarked his friend, "'pon my soul I believe we are making a mistake in going to Japan. You may be sure that we'll have a lot of trouble awaiting us there."

"Not a bit of it. Before we get there every one will have read the cable news that we have been seen in Callao, and no one in Yokohama will ever think of associating Mr. Herbert de Vere and the Honourable Morcombe-Lycett—just arrived from Manila *vid* Singapore in the Spanish mail-steamer —with—er—hum—the two gentlemen who arrived at Callao from Tahiti, after successfully diddling the Australian financial public of thirty thousand quid."

"But what are we going to do with the schooner at Manila?"

"Sell her, my innocent! Sell her to our esteemed friend, Mr. Moses Steinberg, who has assisted me in previous financial transactions—before I had the pleasure of meeting my present valued colleague, the Honourable Mr. Morcombe-Lycett—and who is now taking care to inform the world that we are living in South America."

"And how are we going to account for our boxes of sovereigns? Two mining speculators don't usually carry about heavy sums in gold."

"All managed, my boy. My friend, Mr. Moses Steinberg, will see to that. The ten thousand sovereigns will be valuable gold specimens from Queensland, and will be placed on board the North German Lloyd's steamer at Singapore for safe conveyance to London, where you and I, my dear boy, will follow it. And there also we shall find, I trust, an additional sum of fifteen thousand lying to our credit—the proceeds of our honest toil."

"What are you going to do with Sykes?"

"Give him £500 and tell him to hold his tongue. He's a thundering rascal, and we must pay to shut his mouth."

Then the two proceeded to discuss their lunch, and as they ate and drank and talked and laughed, Banderah and three or four of his men whispered together.

"Seize them from behind and bind them tightly," said the chief, "but kill them not, for that I have promised to Challi."

The Honourable Morcombe-Lycett had just finished his last glass of bottled beer and wanted to smoke. He had taken out his cigar-case, and, wondering at the sudden silence which had fallen upon their native guides, turned round to see where they were, and saw swiftly advancing upon

himself and his companion some half a dozen stalwart natives. In that momentary glance he read danger, and quick as lightning—for he was no coward—he seized his loaded gun, which lay beside him, and fired both barrels one after another, at not ten yards' range.

A chorus of savage yells answered the shots, as two of the natives fell, but ere he could reload or Dalton could fire there came a fierce rush of all the dark-skinned men upon them, and, struggling madly for their lives, they were borne down.

And then the lust of slaughter overcame their fierce assailants, and despite Banderah and two or three of his most trusted men, a club was raised and fell swiftly upon the white, fair forehead of "Mr. de Vere" as he sought to tear away his hands from the vice-like grasp of two huge natives who held them.

"Death to them both!" cried a thin-faced, wrinkled old man named Toka; "*hutu*:[1] for the lives of the thirty and one." Then springing out from the rest, he swung a short-handled, keen-bladed hatchet over his head, and sank it into the brain of the wretched Baxter.

"Stand thou aside, Banderah, son of Paylap," screamed the old man, waving the bloody hatchet fiercely at him. "I, old Toka, the priest, will to-

[1] Synonymous with Maori *utu*—revenge.

day again show the men of Mayou how to drink the blood and eat the flesh of the long pigs the gods have given into our hands," and again he buried the weapon in Baxter's breathless body. And as Banderah looked at the old man's working face, and saw the savage mouth, flecked with foam, writhing and twisting in horrible contortions, and then saw the almost equally dreadful visages of the rest of his men, he knew that the old, old lust for human flesh had come upon them.

So, with the one idea of saving Blount and the missionary and his wife, he turned and fled through the forest towards the beach.

V

THE TAPU OF BANDERAH

The Rev. Wilfrid and Mrs. Deighton were at lunch, talking about the genial manners and other qualifications of their guests, when suddenly they heard a rapid step on the verandah, and Blount dashed into the room.

His face was white with excitement, and they saw that he carried his revolver in his hand.

"What in heaven's name is wrong, Mr. Blount? Why are you armed——"

"For God's sake don't ask me now! Our lives

are in danger—deadly, imminent danger. Follow me to my house!"

"But, my dear sir," began Mr. Deighton, "I do not see—I fail——"

"Man, don't talk! Do you think I do not know what I am saying? Your two friends are both murdered. Banderah is now at my house, too exhausted to tell me more than to come and save you."

"Dear, dear me! Oh, this is dreadful! Let us, Alice, my dear, seek Divine——"

"You fool!" and the trader seized the missionary by the arm as he was about to sink upon his knees. "Stay here and pray if you like—and get your throat cut. In ten—in five minutes more, every native except Banderah will be here ready to burn and murder. I tell you, man, that our only chance of safety is to reach my house first, and then the schooner. Come, Mrs. Deighton. For God's sake, come!"

Pushing past the missionary, he seized Mrs. Deighton by the hand and descended the steps. They had scarcely gone two hundred yards when they heard a strange, awful cry peal through the woods; and Mr. Deighton shuddered. Only once before had he heard such a cry, and that was when, during the early days of the mission, he had seen a native priest tear out the heart of a victim destined for a cannibal feast, and hold it up to the people.

Suddenly little Mrs. Deighton gasped and tottered as they hurried her along; she was already exhausted. Then Deighton stopped.

"Mr. Blount . . . go on by yourself. We have not your strength to run at this speed. I will help my wife along in a minute or two. Some of the mission people will surely come to our aid."

"Will they?" said Blount grimly. "Look for yourself and see; there's not a soul in the whole village. They have gone to see——" and he made an expressive gesture.

Mr. Deighton groaned. "My God, it is terrible!" —then suddenly, as he saw his wife's deathly features, his real nature came out. "Mr. Blount, you are a brave man. For God's sake save my dear wife! I am too exhausted to run any further. I am too weak from my last attack of the fever. But we are only a quarter of a mile away from your house now. Take her on with you, but give me your revolver. I can at least cover your retreat for a time."

Blount hesitated, then giving the weapon to the missionary, he lifted the fainting woman in his arms, and said—

"Try and come on a little; as soon as I am in sight of the house your wife will be safe; you must at least keep me in sight."

As the trader strode along, carrying the unconscious woman in his strong arms, the missionary

looked at the weapon in his hand, and shuddered again.

"May God forgive me if I have done wrong," he muttered. "But take the life of one of His creatures to save my own I never will. Yet to save hers I must do it."

Then with trembling feet but brave heart he walked unsteadily along after the trader and his burden. So far, no sound had reached him since that one dreadful cry smote upon his ear, and a hope began to rise in his breast that no immediate danger threatened. A short distance away, embowered among the trees, was the house of Burrowes. The door was closed, and not a sign of life was discernible about the place.

"Heavens, were they asleep?" He had heard that Burrowes and the German had been carousing all the morning with the captain of the *Starlight*. Likely enough they were all lying in a drunken slumber. "God, give me strength to warn them," he said to himself; and then with a last glance at Blount and his wife, he resolutely turned aside and began to ascend the hill.

But before he gained the summit, Blount had reached the fence surrounding his house, and Banderah and Taya and her two young brothers, rifles in hand, met the trader.

"Quick, take her!" and he pushed Mrs. Deighton into Taya's arms and looked back.

"My God! he's going up to Burrowes' house! Come, Banderah," and he started back again, "he'll be speared or shot before he gets there."

Just as the missionary reached the door and began in feeble, exhausted tones to call out, Blount and the chief caught up to him, and seizing his hands dragged him away again down the hill.

"Don't bother about them, they are all on board," was all Blount said. And there was no time to talk, for now fierce cries were heard in the direction of the mission house, and Blount and Banderah, looking back, saw black, naked figures leap over the low stone wall enclosing the missionary's dwelling and disappear inside.

"Just in time," muttered the trader, as dragging Mr. Deighton between them they gained the house, and sat the missionary down beside his wife, who with a cry of thankfulness threw her arms about his neck and then quietly fainted.

* * * * *

For nearly half an hour Blount, with Banderah and the missionary by his side, looked out through the windows and saw the natives plundering and wrecking the mission house and the dwellings of Schwartzkoff and Burrowes. A mile away, motionless upon the glassy waters of the harbour, lay the schooner, with her boat astern, and every now and then Blount would take a look at her through his glass.

"I can't see a soul on deck," he said to Mr. Deighton. "I heard that Peter and Burrowes went off this morning with the captain, all pretty well drunk. Would to God I knew what is best to do! To go on board would perhaps mean that those ruffians would shoot us down before we were alongside. No, we'll stay here and take our chance. Banderah says he feels pretty sure that he can protect us from his own people. They'd never dare to hurt him; and I think *that* will steady them a bit," and he pointed to the fence, upon which, at intervals, were tied green cocoanut boughs. These had just been placed there by Banderah himself, and meant that the house was *tapu*—it and all in it were sacred.

"God grant it may!" said Mr. Deighton, and looking at the mystic sign, the use of which he had so often tried to put down as a silly, heathenish practice, he felt a twinge of conscience.

At last the work of plunder was over, and then Blount saw a swarm of black, excited savages, led by two or three "devil-doctors" or priests, advance towards the house. At the same moment Banderah, looking seaward, saw that the boat had left the schooner and was pulling ashore. He was just about to point her out to the trader when, for some reason, he changed his mind, turned away, and joined his white friends at the other end of the room.

Following the lead of the "devil-doctors," who, stripped to the waist, and with their heads covered with the hideous masks used in their incantations, looked like demons newly arisen from the pit, the yelling swarm of natives at last reached the fence outside Blount's house; and Mr. Deighton, with an inward groan, saw among them some of his pet converts, stark naked and armed with spears and clubs.

Leaping and dancing with mad gyrations, and uttering curious grunting sounds as their feet struck the ground, the devil-doctors at last came within a few feet of the gate in the trader's fence. Then, suddenly, as they caught sight of a branch of cocoanut leaf twisted in and around the woodwork of the gate, they stopped their maddened whirl as if by magic; and upon those behind them fell the silence of fear.

"Thank God!" muttered Blount, "we are safe. They will not break Banderah's *tapu*."

Then, rifle in hand, and with quiet, unmoved face, Banderah opened the trader's door and came out before them all.

"Who among ye desires the life of Banderah and those to whom he has given his *tapu*?" he said.

The smaller of the two priests dashed aside his mask, and revealed the face of the old man Toka, who had struck Baxter his death-blow.

"Who indeed, O chief? If it be to thy mind to make *tapu* this house and all in it, who is there dare break it? To the white man Challi and his sons and daughters we meant no harm, though sweet to our bellies will be the flesh of those whom we have slain and who now roast for the feast. But more are yet to come; for I, Toka, lost my son, when thou, Banderah, lost thy brother; and the gods have told me that I shall eat my fill of those who stole him."

The savage, bitter hatred that rang through the old man's voice, and the deep, approving murmur of those who stood about him, warned both Banderah and Blount that the lust for slaughter was not yet appeased; so it was with a feeling of intense surprise and relief that he and the missionary saw them suddenly withdraw, and move rapidly away to the rear of the house among the thick jungle.

"That's d—d curious!" said Blount, turning to Banderah and speaking in English; and then the chief took him by the arm and pointed towards the shore—the boat, pulled by Schwartzkoff and Burrowes, with Captain Bilker sitting in the stern, had just touched the beach. Then it flashed across his mind in an instant why the natives had left so suddenly—they were lying in ambush for the three men!

"By God! bad as they are, I can't let them walk

to their deaths," said Blount, jumping outside, so as to hail and warn them. But before he could utter a sound, Banderah sprang upon him and clapped his hand to his mouth.

"Challi," he said, "they must die. Try to save them, and we all perish. For the sake of thy daughters and of thy sons, raise not thy voice nor thy hand. Must all our blood run because of these three dogs' lives?"

Even as he spoke the end came. Staggering up the beach in drunken hilarity, the three whites did not notice, as they headed for the path, a file of natives, armed with spears and clubs, walk quietly along between them and the water's edge. There they sat down and waited. But not for long, for presently from out the thick, tangled jungle in front came a humming whirr of deadly arrows and in a few seconds the three white men were wallowing in their blood. Then came that blood-curdling shout of savage triumph, telling those who heard it that all was over. Before its echoes died away the bleeding bodies were carried to where a thick, heavy smoke rising from the jungle told the shuddering missionary that the awful feast was preparing. When he looked again not a native was in sight.

Standing apart in the room from the others, Blount and Banderah spoke hurriedly together, and then the trader came to the missionary.

"Mr. Deighton, if you wish to save your wife's and your own life, and escape from this slaughter-house, now is your time. As God is my judge I believe we shall never be safe again, and I would gladly go with you if I could. But my daughter Nelly is at Lak-a-lak, and—well, that settles it. Banderah here will tell you that he dreads your staying, as the priests may plot your death at any moment. I implore you, sir, to think of your wife. See, there is the boat, drifting along the beach with the tide. For God's sake be advised and get on board the schooner, and whatever port you do reach, send a vessel to take me away!"

Then, before the missionary and his wife could realise what was happening, Banderah had run to the beach, swam to the boat, seized the painter, gained the shore again, and pulled her along till opposite the trader's house, just as Blount and Taya, supporting Mrs. Deighton between them, were leaving the house to meet him.

In twenty minutes more they were close to the *Starlight*, and saw that her crew were weighing the anchor. On the after deck stood the mate and steward with rifles in their hands.

"What in the name of God is wrong?" said the mate, as the boat ranged up alongside, and the missionary and his wife were assisted on deck.

"Don't ask now, man. Get your anchor up as quick as you can and put to sea. Your captain

and the two passengers are all dead. Clear out at once if you don't want the ship to be taken."

"I thought something was wrong when I saw the native dragging the boat along. Lend us a hand to get under weigh, will you?" and the mate sprang forward.

In another five minutes the *Starlight's* anchor was up, and then Blount and Banderah, with a hurried farewell to Mr. and Mrs. Deighton, sprang into the boat and pushed off.

"May God bless and keep you," called out the missionary to Blount, "and may we meet again soon;" then sinking on his knees beside his wife, he raised his face to heaven, and the trader saw that tears were streaming down his worn and rugged cheeks.

Blount never heard of the missionary and his wife again. Long, long afterwards he did hear that some wreckage of a vessel like the *Starlight* had been found on Rennel Island, and that sovereigns were discovered among the pools and crevices of the reef for many years after. Whether she ran ashore or drifted there dismasted—for a heavy gale set in a week after she left Mayou—is one of those mysteries of the sea that will never be solved.

The Beginning of the Sea Story of Australia

TO many people in England the mention of Australia conjures pictures of tented gold-fields and tall, black-bearded, red-shirted bush-rangers; of mounted police recruited from "flaxen-haired younger sons of good old English families, well-groomed and typically Anglo-Saxon"; of squatters and sheep runs; of buckjumpers ridden by the most daring riders in the world; and of much more to the same purpose; but never is presented a picture of the sea or sailor folk.

Yet the first half-century of Australian history is all to do with the ocean. The British sailor laid the foundation of the Australian nation, and, in the beginning, more than any other class, the sailorman did the colonising—and did it well. This, however, is the story of most British possessions, and generally it is gratefully remembered and the sailor

duly credited and kindly thought of for his work. But in these days the dry west wind from the back blocks seems to have blown the taste of brine and the sound of the seethe of the curling "white horse" out of the mind of the native-born Australian; and the sailing day of a mail boat is the only thing that the average colonial knows or cares to know about salt water.

To write on such a subject as this, one has to leave out so much, that it is necessary to begin almost in the middle in order to reach an ending. Sea exploration and coast surveying opened the ways; whaling—it may surprise the reader, but it is nevertheless true—was once the main support of Australia and New Zealand; and runaway sailors formed a very considerable part of the back country population, such men making handier and better farm labourers, stockmen, and, later on, miners, by reason of their adaptability to strange surroundings, than ticket-of-leave men or the average free emigrant.

The first four successive Governors of Australia —in the beginning, be it remembered, the continent was one colony — were captains in the Navy. Governing in those rough days was not a mere master-of-the-ceremonies appointment, and Phillip, Hunter, King, and Bligh, if they made mistakes, considering their previous training, the populations they governed and the times in which they lived,

amply justify Palmerston's words that if he wanted a thing done well in a distant part of the world; when he wanted a man with a good head, a good heart, lots of pluck, and plenty of common sense—he would always send for a captain of the Navy.

Phillip, the first of these Governors, was sent out to found "a penal settlement at Botany Bay, on the coast of New Holland," and did the work in such fashion, in spite of every discouragement from the forces of nature, the Home Government, and his own officers, as to well entitle him to a place among the builders of Greater Britain. What was known of Australia, or rather New Holland—the name of Australia was still in futurity—in 1788, when Phillip first landed on its shores?

Let us say nothing of Spanish, Portuguese, and Dutch voyages; of wrecks and piracies; of maroonings, and massacres by blacks; of the discoveries of Dampier and of Cook, but sum the whole up thus: the east coast of Australia, from its northernmost extremity to its southernmost, was practically unknown to the world, and was absolutely unknown to Englishmen until Cook's first voyage. Cook, in the *Endeavour*, ran along the whole east coast, entering a few bays, naming many points, and particularly describing Botany Bay where he stayed some little time; then he sailed through Torres Straits, and thence, *viâ* Batavia, home to England, where he arrived in June, 1771. The English

Government took no advantage of his discoveries until 1786, when Botany Bay was fixed upon as the site of a new penal settlement; and this choice was determined, more than anything else, by the advice of Sir Joseph Banks, who, from the time of his voyage with Cook in the *Endeavour* till his death, took the keenest interest in the continent; and colonists are more indebted to the famous naturalist for his friendly services than to any other civilian Englishman of the time.

Phillip's commission ordered him to proceed to Botany Bay, but authorised him to choose another site for the settlement if he considered a better could be found. He arrived with his fleet of transports in 1788, after a voyage of many months' duration, so managed that, though the fleet was the first to make the passage and was made up of more ships and more prisoners than any succeeding fleet, there was less sickness and fewer deaths than on any of the convoys which followed it. Phillip made a careful examination of Botany Bay, and finding it unsuitable for planting, the settlement was removed to Port Jackson. After landing the exiles, the transports returned to Europe *viâ* China and the East Indies, and their route was along the north-east coast of Australia. The voyages of these returning transports, under the navy agent, Lieutenant Shortland, were fruitful in discoveries and adventures.

Meanwhile Phillip and his officers were working

hard, building their homes and taking their recreation in exploring the country and the coast for many miles around them. And with such poor means as an indifferent Home Government provided, this work of exploration went on continually under each naval governor, the pressing want of food spurring the pioneers ever on in the search for good land; but that very need, with the lack of vessels, of men who could be trusted, of all that was necessary for exploration, kept them chained in a measure to their base at Sydney Cove.

Phillip, white-faced, cold and reserved, but with a heart full of pity, was responsible for the lives of a thousand people in a desolate country twelve thousand miles from England—so desolate that his discontented officers without exception agreed that the new colony was "the most God-forsaken land in the world." The convict settlers were so ill-chosen, and the Government so neglected to supply them with even the barest necessities from Home, that for several years after their landing they were in constant distress from famine; and disease and death from this cause alone was an evil regularly to be encountered by the silent, hard-working Phillip. The only means of relief open to the starving settlement was by importing food from Batavia and the Cape of Good Hope, and to procure such supplies Phillip had but two ships at his disposal—the worn-out old frigate *Sirius* (which was lost at Nor-

folk Island soon after the founding of the settlement) and a small brig of war, the *Supply*—which for many weary months were the only means of communication with civilisation.

The Home Government, when they did despatch a second fleet, instead of sending supplies for the starving people under Phillip's care, sent more prisoners, and very little to eat was sent with them. The authorities seem to have had an idea that a few hundred shovels, some decayed garden seeds, and a thousand or two of Old Bailey men and women criminals, were all the means needed to found a prosperous and self-supporting colony. How Phillip and his successors surmounted these difficulties is another story; but in the sea history of Australia the work of the naval governors occupies no small space in it. Remember, too, that the Torres Straits route and the Great Barrier Reef, now as well charted as the Solent, were only then being slowly discovered by clumsy old sailing craft, whose masters learnt to dread and avoid the dangers of the unknown coast as children grow cautious of fire, by actually touching it.

Hunter, the second Governor of New South Wales, and King, the third Governor, both did remarkable surveying work on the coast while serving under Phillip, and both made still more remarkable voyages to England. Hunter was the senior naval officer under Phillip, and was in com-

mand of the *Sirius* when she was lost on Norfolk Island.

This is how the dauntless Hunter got home with the crew of the *Sirius*, after waiting six months on Norfolk Island for the chance of a passage. The *Waaksamheyd*, a Dutch snow [1] of 300-tons burden, which had brought supplies to Sydney from Batavia, was engaged to take Hunter and his shipwrecked crew to England. She was *thirteen months* on the voyage, and here are some extracts from Hunter's letter to the Admiralty, written from Portsmouth on the 23rd of April, 1792 :—

"'I sailed from Port Jackson on the 27th of March, 1791, victualled for six months and with sixty tons of water. We were one hundred and twenty-three people on board all told" (remember this vessel was of three hundred tons burden). "The master was directed to call at Norfolk Island to receive despatches, but contrary winds prevented us carrying out these orders. We steered to the northward and made New Caledonia, passing to the westward of it, as the master (a Dutchman) did not feel himself qualified to navigate a vessel in these unknown seas. He had, upon leaving Port Jackson, requested my assistance, which I gave him. In sailing to the northward we fell in with several

[1] A snow differed somewhat slightly from a brig. It had two masts similar to the fore and mainmasts of a brig or ship, and, close abaft the mainmast, a topsail mast.

islands and shoals, the situations of which we determined, and it is my intention, if the Navy Board will permit me, to lay a short account of this northern passage before the Board, when the discoveries will be particularly mentioned. No ship that I have heard of having sailed between New Britain and New Ireland since that passage was discovered by Captain Carteret in Her Majesty's sloop *Swallow*, I was the more desirous to take that route. . . . We passed through the Straits of Macassar and arrived at Batavia after a tedious and distressing passage of twenty-six weeks."

After burying an officer and two seamen at Batavia, Hunter left that place on October 20th, reached the Cape on the 17th of December, and was driven to sea again after the loss of two anchors, till the 30th. So weak and ill were his men from the effects of their stay in the unhealthy climate of Batavia, that he had to remain at the Cape till the 18th of January, when he again put to sea and sailed for England.

Hunter's brief and precise official account of his voyage discloses little of the great distress of that thirteen months' passage; but it shows how the spirit of discovery was in the man; how, in spite of the care of one hundred and twenty-three people in a 300-ton vessel, and half rations, he had time and energy enough to think of surveying. One result of his voyage was his strongly expressed

opinion that the proper route home from Australia was *vid* Cape Horn—now the recognised homeward route for sailing vessels.

The name of King ought never to be forgotten, for the services of father and son in Australian waters were very great. King, the elder, came out with Phillip as second lieutenant of the crazy old *Sirius*. He had previously served under Phillip in the East Indies, and soon after the arrival of the first fleet in "Botany Bay," as New South Wales was then called, he was sent with a detachment of Marines and a number of convicts to colonise Norfolk Island. His task was a hard one, but he accomplished it in the face of almost heartbreaking difficulties.

Phillip, finding that his despatches failed to awaken the Home Government to a sense of the deplorable situation of the colony he had founded at Port Jackson, determined to send home a man who would represent the true state of affairs. He chose King for the service. Every other officer—both naval and military—was ready to go, and would have eloquently described the miseries of the colonists, and harped on the necessity for an instant abandonment of the settlement—they were writing letters to this effect by every chance they could get to forward them—but this was not what Phillip wanted. He, and he alone, recognised the future possibilities of New South Wales, writing

even at the time of his deepest distress: "This will be the greatest acquisition Great Britain has ever made." All he asked was for reasonable help in the way of food and decent settlers who could work. All he got in answer to his requests was the further shipment of the scum of the gaols and the hulks—and some more spades and seeds. King believed in his chief and cordially worked with him—and King was the silent Phillip's one friend.

So King went home, his voyage thither being one of the most singular ever made by naval officer. He left Sydney Cove in April, 1790, and after a tedious passage reached Batavia. Here he engaged a small Dutch vessel to take him to the Cape of Good Hope, sailing for that port in August. Before the ship had been a week at sea, save four men, the whole crew, including the master, were stricken with the hideous "putrid fever"—a common disease in "country" ships at that time. King, a quick and masterful man, took command, and with his four well men lived on deck in a tent to escape contagion. The rest of the ship's company, which included a surgeon, lay below delirious, and one after another of them dying—seventeen of them died in a fortnight.

King tells how, when handling the bodies to throw them overboard, he and his men covered their mouths with sponges soaked in vinegar to prevent contagion. In this short-handed condition

he navigated the vessel to the Mauritius, where, "having heard of the misunderstanding with the French" the gallant officer refused to take passage in a French frigate; but procuring a new crew worked his way to the Cape, where he arrived in September, reaching England in December, after a passage which altogether occupied eight months—a letter from England to Australia and a reply to it now occupies about ten weeks.

In England King was well received, being confirmed in his appointment as Commandant of Norfolk Island, and he succeeded in getting some help for his fellow-colonists. Upon his return to his island command the little colony proved a great worry. The military guard mutinied, and King armed the convict settlers to suppress the mutiny! This act of his gave great offence in some quarters. Phillip had resigned the command at Sydney, and the Lieutenant-Governor of the colony, who was in charge, was the commanding officer of the New South Wales Regiment—more celebrated in the records for its mutinies than its services—and the degradation of the Norfolk Island detachment by King was never forgiven by the soldiers, but the Home Government quite approved his conduct.

But King made one very serious mistake. He had sent a vessel to New Zealand, and from thence had imported certain Maori chiefs to instruct the settlers on Norfolk Island in flax cultivation.

King had pledged his word to these noble savages to return them to their native country, and in order to do so, and make sure of their getting there, he himself embarked in a vessel, leaving his command for a few days to the charge of his subordinate, while he sailed the thirteen hundred miles to New Zealand and back. For this he was censured, but was notwithstanding afterwards appointed the third Governor of New South Wales, succeeding Hunter.

King's son, who was born at Norfolk Island in 1791, entered the Navy in 1807, and saw any amount of fighting in the French war; then went to Australia in 1817, and surveyed its eastern coast in such a manner that, when he returned to England in 1823 there was little but detail work left for those who followed him. Then he was appointed to the *Adventure*, which, in conjunction with the *Beagle*, surveyed the South American coast. In 1830 he retired and settled in Australia, dying there in 1856. His son in turn entered the service, but early followed his father's example, and turned farmer in Australia. He still lives, and is a member of the Legislative Council or Upper House of the New South Wales Parliament.

Here is a family record! Three generations, all naval officers, and all men who have taken an active share in the founding and growth of Greater Britain; and yet not one man in a thousand in Australia, much less in England, has probably the

remotest idea of the services rendered to the Empire by this family.

The fourth and last naval Governor, Bligh, is more often remembered in connection with the *Bounty* mutiny than for his governorship of New South Wales. He was deposed by the military in 1808, for his action in endeavouring to suppress the improper traffic in rum which was being carried on by the officers of the New South Wales Regiment. This second mutiny, of which he was the victim, certainly cannot be blamed against the honesty of his administration; and the assertion, so often repeated, that he hid himself under his bed when the mutinous soldiers—who had been well primed with rum by their officers—marched to Government House, can best be answered by the statement that Nelson publicly thanked him for his skill and gallantry at Copenhagen, and by the heroism which he showed in the most remarkable boat voyage in history. He may have been the most tyrannical and overbearing naval officer that ever entered the service, but he was not the man to hide himself under a bed.

There were other naval officers of the early Australian days whose services were no less valuable to the infant colony. Think of the men associated with this time, and of the names famous in history, which are in some way linked with Australia. Dampier, Cook, La Pérouse,

Bligh, Edwards and the *Pandora*, Vancouver, Flinders, Bass—all these are familiar to the world, and there are others in plenty; for example, Grant, who in his vessel, the brig *Lady Nelson*, did such work in Australian waters as, if performed nowadays say in Africa, would have been recorded in hundreds of newspaper interviews, many process-work pictures and a 21s. book with cheap editions!

What a story is that of Bass and Flinders! Such noble, disinterested courage! Such splendid service to English colonisation, and such a sad ending to it all.

Bass and Flinders, in their tiny open boat, the *Tom Thumb*, and in the sloop *Norfolk*, dotting the blank map of Australia with the names of their discoveries—it is not necessary surely to remind the reader that Bass began, and together the two men completed, the discovery and passage of the straits between Van Dieman's Land and the main continent. Bass surveyed something like six hundred miles of the Australian coast in a whaleboat with a crew of six men! And one *cannot* summarise Flinders' work in the *Norfolk* and in the *Investigator* before the old ship was condemned and converted into a hulk to rot in Sydney Harbour.

How were these men rewarded for their services, and what has posterity done to keep their names

in remembrance? In 1803 Flinders started for England, was wrecked, and making his way to the Mauritius was there, to the everlasting disgrace of Napoleon's Island governor, detained a prisoner for more than six years. Of course the English Government ultimately procured his release, but it took them all that time to do it; and when he did get back they promoted his juniors over his head. When he died in 1814, a broken heart was as much as anything else the cause of his death.

Bass, after leaving Australia, went to England and sailed in an armed merchantman bound to South America. At Valparaiso the Governor of the town refused to allow the vessel to trade. Bass, who was then in command of the ship, threatened to bombard the town, and the refusal was withdrawn; but, watching their opportunity the authorities seized him when he was off his guard, and it was supposed he was sent to the interior. As the years passed by there were one or two reports that he was seen working in the mines, but it seems to have been no one's business to inquire into his fate. It is more than probable that the brave Bass died a slave.

But the whalers, "South Seamen" and East Indiamen, did no less good service than the King's ships in the early days, and yet even the old books do them but scant justice. For the first fifty

years of Australian colonisation the merchantmen charted reefs, discovered harbours, and did just those things for the desert waters of the Australasian Pacific as were afterwards done by land explorers, in their camel and pack-horse journeyings into the waterless interior of the continent. And the stories that could be told! The whalers and sealers who were cast away on desert islands, and lived Robinson Crusoe lives for years! The open boat voyages. The massacres by blacks. The cuttings-off by the savage islanders of the South Pacific. The mutinies and sea fights!

Hobart in Tasmania, Twofold Bay in New South Wales, and many New Zealand ports were the great whaling stations, and Sydney the commercial headquarters. Fifty years ago there were something like twenty whalers in the Hobart Fleet alone; now, one or two hulks lying in Whaler's "Rotten Row" is practically all that survives of the trade.

The Americans took a leading part in the industry, and ships with *New Bedford* or *Nantucket* under their sterns traversed the Pacific from one end to the other. Australian whaling was begun (Dampier reported whales as early as 1699) in Governor Phillip's time, by some of the convict transports coming out with whaling equipment in their holds, and after disembarking their human freight, departing for the "Fisheries."

Some of these ships often remained in the Pacific for years, making cruises of twelve or eighteen months' duration, returning to Sydney when full ships to discharge and refresh, their cargoes being sent to England in some returning "favourite fast clipper," while the whalers went back to their greasy and dangerous vocation, until they were lost, or cut off by the savages, or worn out and converted into hulks.

What numbers of them *were* lost! and what wonderful and blood-curdling experiences their crews underwent when they were castaways, or deserted, or were marooned on "the islands"! Here is a story of a vessel lost in Torres Straits in 1836—not a whaler, but an East Indiaman. Some of her crew and passengers managed to land on the mainland of North Australia and were there captured by blacks. Six months later a few survivors were rescued and landed in Sydney; and this is what had happened to the only woman of the party, Mrs. Fraser, wife of the captain: She had seen her child die, her husband speared to death before her face, the chief mate roasted alive, the second mate burned over a slow fire until he was too crippled to walk, and otherwise horribly and indescribably tortured, and she herself was made to climb trees for honey for her captors by having lighted gum branches applied to her body.

In another instance a vessel was wrecked on the North Australian coast in 1846, and nearly twenty years later the sole survivor turned up at a cattle station near Port Denison, in North Queensland. He had been all this time living among the blacks, unable to escape, and civilisation had found its way, in the years that had elapsed, far enough into the back country to reach him. The stockman who first saw the man took him for a black and levelled his rifle at him, when he was stopped from shooting the poor fellow by the words, "Don't fire, I am an Englishman."

Here, told in a few words, is the story of the first landing in Victoria, and the first discovery of coal in New South Wales: On the map of Tasmania, in the north-east corner, is marked the Furneaux Group of islands in Bass's Straits. Dotted about the cluster are such names as Preservation Island, Clarke Island, and Armstrong Channel. These names all commemorate the wreck of the *Sydney Cove*, Captain Hamilton, bound from Calcutta to Sydney, and lost in February, 1797. She sprang a leak on the 13th of December, 1796, and her crew, chiefly Lascars, managed to keep her afloat till the 9th of the following February, when the skipper made Preservation Island, and there beached her. All the people landed safely, and got what stores they

could ashore. Then it was decided to despatch the long boat to Port Jackson for help.

Thompson the mate, Clarke the supercargo, three European seamen, and a dozen Lascars manned the boat and left the island on the 29th of February. On the 1st of March the boat was driven ashore and battered to pieces close to Cape Howe (near the present boundary line of Victoria and New South Wales) three hundred miles from Sydney, in a country never before trodden by the feet of white men. All hands were saved, and after a fortnight's rest, feeding on such shellfish as they could obtain, the party set out to walk to Sydney.

Clarke kept a rough diary of this journey, telling of encounters with blacks, of death and madness by starvation and other privations; of how they crossed wide and shark-infested rivers by building rafts of tree branches cut down and fashioned with jack knives; of how the lives of men were purchased from the blacks by strips of clothing; and of how they counted the buttons on their ragged garments, and thus reckoned how many lives could be bought from the savages with what remained.

The terrible march lasted until the 15th of May; then three exhausted men, horrible to look upon, and the only survivors of seventeen who had, sixty days before, begun the journey, were picked up a few miles to the south of Sydney by a fishing boat.

The spot where they were seen walking along the beach was close to Port Hacking, and Clarke, three days before his rescue, had lit a fire and cooked some fish with coal he picked up. This was the first discovery of the great southern coal-fields of New South Wales.

There are other less gruesome stories than these; for example that of the Sydney whaler *Policy*, which, sailing under a Letter of Marque for the Moluccas, was set upon by a Dutch private ship of war—the *Swift*—at one time a formidable and successful French privateer. Captain Foster of the *Policy*, though his armament was very inferior and many of his crew were prostrated with fever, engaged the Dutchman, fought him for some hours, and brought his ship a prize into Sydney Harbour. Two Spanish vessels were captured in the same way by armed Sydney whalers; so that Australian waters have seen a little fighting.

On board the convict ships of those early days there were often mutinies, desperate and sometimes bloody, and some of these led to remarkable results. In one instance the soldiers—not the prisoners—rose upon the crew and the ship's officers, turned them adrift in an open boat, and carried off the ship. They were recaptured afterwards by a man-of-war in the Indian Ocean and brought to justice. Convict mutinies often were only suppressed after desperate hand-to-hand

fighting; then a day or two later the ringleaders would be hanged from the yardarm, and a dozen or more convicts flogged at the gratings. And these things, be it remembered, were going on only an old man's lifetime ago.

New Zealand is fertile in adventure stories, and the well-known *Boyd* massacre is paralleled by two or three other tragedies equally as dreadful, if less often told. The whaling history of that colony would make a book—not of the kind suitable for young ladies seminaries, 'tis true, but mighty strong in human interest, and presenting the race as well as the sex problem for the study of the reader.

Statistics are terribly dry reading, but by way of contrasting the condition of Australian shipping then and now, it is worth while quoting a few figures.

In 1835, the heyday of the colonial whaling trade, when the smoky glare of the whaleships' try-works lit up the darkness of the Pacific ocean night, there were forty-one vessels, of a total tonnage of 9,257 tons, registered in New South Wales, employed in the fishery. In the same year twenty-two vessels arrived in Sydney from the various grounds, their cargoes of whalebone, sealskins, and sperm and black oil valuing altogether about £150,000. Now the whaling trade in Southern Seas is represented by two or three small and poorly equipped ships from Hobart, though the whales—sperm, right,

and humpback—are again as plentiful as they were in the first years of the fishery. One of the present writers, less than four years ago, counted over three hundred humpbacks passing to the northward in two days on the coast of New South Wales, while there were ten times that number of the swift and dangerous "fin-back" whales travelling with them.

But, though the whale fishery is extinct, there is something to be shown instead.

It has been said that twenty-two whalers entered Sydney in 1835, which means that during that year not twice that number of vessels of all descriptions entered the port—for the whaling was then *the* trade. But the steamer was beginning to count, and the beginning of the Sydney steam trade is not without a peculiar interest—for Londoners at any rate.

The *Sophia Jane* was the first steamer in Australasian waters. She arrived in Sydney from London, *viâ* the Cape of Good Hope, with cargo and passengers, on the 14th of May. This vessel was built on the Thames by a well-known shipbuilder of the time, William Evans, who was the builder of many other notable early steamers. She was running for a summer or two as a passenger steamer between Gravesend and London; then between different ports in the south of England; and then, under a Lieutenant Biddulph, of the

Royal Navy, she was sent to Sydney. The little vessel was 126 feet long by 20 feet beam, drew 6 feet of water, was of 256 tons burden, and had accommodation for fifty-four passengers; her engines were of 50 horse-power, and her speed eight knots an hour. This was the first steamer in the Southern Seas—the forerunner of a fleet of mighty leviathans.

In the Far North

"*Out on the wastes of the Never Never—*
That's where the dead men lie!
There where the heat-waves dance for ever—
That's where the dead men lie!"
(BARCROFT BOAKE,
in the Sydney *Bulletin*.)

I

JACK BARRINGTON, nominal owner of Tinandra Downs cattle station on the Gilbert River in the far north of North Queensland, was riding slowly over his run, when, as the fierce rays of a blazing sun, set in a sky of brass, smote upon his head and shoulders and his labouring stock-horse plodded wearily homewards over the spongy, sandy soil, the lines of Barcroft Boake came to his mind, and, after he had repeated them mentally, he cursed aloud.

"'*That's where the dead men lie.*' Poor Boake must have thought of this God-forsaken part of an utterly God-forsaken country, I think, when he wrote 'Out where the Dead Men Lie.' For I believe

that God Almighty has forgotten it! Oh for rain, rain, rain! Rain to send the Gilbert down in a howling yellow flood, and turn this blarsted spinifex waste of scorching sand and desolation into green grass—and save me and the youngsters from giving it best, and going under altogether. . . . Boake knew this cursed country well. . . . I wonder if he ever 'owned' a station—one with a raging drought, a thundering mortgage, and a worrying and greedy bank sooling him on to commit suicide, or else provide rain as side issues. . . . I don't suppose he had a wife and children to leave to the mercy of the Australian Pastoralists' Bank. D—n and curse the Australian Pastoralists' Bank, and the drought, and this scorching sand and hateful spinifex—and God help the poor cattle!"

He drew rein almost under the shade of a clump of stunted sandalwood, which had, in good seasons, been a favourite mustering camp, and looked about him, and then he passed his hand over his eyes to shut out for a few moments the melancholy spectacle before him.

I have said that he pulled up "almost" under shelter; further he could not advance, for the hard, parched ground immediately under the shade of the sandalwoods was thickly covered by the stiffened sun-dried carcasses of some hundreds of dead cattle, which, having become too weak to leave the sheltering trees in search of food and water

had lain down and died. Beyond, scattered singly and about in twos and threes, were the remains of scores of other wretched beasts, which, unable to drag themselves either to the sandy river-bed or to the scanty shade of the stunted timber, had perished where they fell.

With a heavy sigh Harrington dismounted, took off his water-bag from the saddle, and pouring a little water into his hat, gave his horse a drink. Then he drank a few mouthfuls himself, filled and lit his pipe, and sat down, to rest awhile until the sun had lost its fierce intensity—and think.

And he thought despairingly of the black prospect which for the past six or seven months had tormented him by day, and haunted him at night, broken now and then with a gleam of hope when the pitiless blue of the sky changed to grey, and rain seemed near, only to be followed by renewed and bitter disappointment.

"It cannot last much longer," he thought; "even if rain came within a week the rest of the poor brutes left alive will be too weak to recover—and there's not hands enough on the station to cut leaves for them. Even the blacks have cleared out lower down the river . . . found a good waterhole I daresay, and, like wise niggers, are camping there. Why doesn't Providence give a poor honest bullock as much show for his life in a drought as a damned, filthy blackfellow! Instead of hoofs—in

this part of the country at any rate—cattle ought to have feet like a bandicoot, then the poor beasts could worry along by digging waterholes in the river bed."

Then, sick at heart as he was, a faint smile flitted over his sun-bronzed face at the fancy.

An hour passed, and Harrington, with another weary sigh, rose and saddled his horse—one of the few now remaining to him and able to carry a rider. Five miles away from the sandalwood camp was another and larger patch of timber—tall, slender brigalows, which grew on the edge of a dried-up swamp, once the haunt and breeding place of countless thousands of wild duck, teal, and geese. This was another of the mustering camps on Tinandra, and as it lay on his way home, he decided to go there and see if any of the "Big Swamp" cattle were still alive. As he rode slowly over towards the fringe of timber, the westering sun turned from a dazzling, blinding gold to a gradually deepening red; and his sweating horse gave a snort of satisfaction as the soft, spongy, and sandy spinifex country was left behind, and the creature's hoofs struck upon the hard sun-baked plain of yellow earth which lay between the two camps. Looking down at the great, widely spreading cracks in the hungry soil, the result of a seven-months' continuous drought, Harrington almost unconsciously bent his head and thought

that surely God would send rain. He was not a religious man in the conventional sense—he had never been inside a church in his life—but the memory of his dead mother's belief in God's mercy and goodness was still strong within him.

The brigalow scrub was about half a mile in length, and stood between the swamp and the high river bank. At the dried-up bed of the swamp itself he did not care to look a second time; its once reedy margin was now a sight of horror, for many hundreds of cattle had been bogged there long months before, as they had striven to get further out to the centre where there was yet left a little water, saved from evaporation by the broad leaves of the blue water-lilies.

Skirting the inner edge of the scrub till he reached its centre, he looked carefully among the timber, but not a beast was to be seen; then dismounting he led his horse through, came out upon the river bank, and looked across the wide expanse of almost burning sand which stretched from bank to bank, unbroken in its desolation except by a few ti-trees whose roots, deep down, kept them alive.

"Bob, old fellow," he said to his horse, "we've another ten miles to go, and there's no use in killing ourselves. I think that we can put in half an hour digging sand, and manage to raise a drink down there in the river bed."

Still leading the animal, which seemed to know his master's intention, Harrington walked down the sloping bank, his long riding-boots sinking deeply into the fine, sandy soil, and Bob pricked up his ears and gave a true stock-horse sigh of weariness and anticipation combined.

On the opposite side of the river bed and close under the bank were growing two or three heavy ti-trees, and here, just as the sun had set, he halted, again unsaddled, and after lighting a fire, began to scoop out a hole with his quart pot in between the roots of the trees. For some minutes he worked on with energy, then he stopped and listened, and Bob, too, turned his head inquiringly, for he also had heard the sound—it was only the cry of a beast, but it seemed so near that Harrington ceased his digging and stood up to look.

Not a hundred yards distant he saw, by the light of the now brightly blazing fire, four gaunt steers and a skeleton heifer, staggering and swaying over the river sand towards him in their weakness and agony of hunger and thirst. The poor creatures had seen the man and the horse! As they toiled towards the light of the fire, a dreadful, wheezing moan came from the parched throat of the leading steer as it laboured pantingly over to something human—something it associated with water, and grass, and life, and presently the wretched animal, with one last effort, fell in its

tracks almost at Harrington's feet. It lay there quiet enough for a minute or two, with lean, outstretched neck and one horn buried in the sand, its fast glazing eye turned to the man, and seeming to say, "Give me water or death."

Harrington, wrought up and excited to the last pitch, flung himself upon his knees, and placed his cheek against that of the dying steer, and a sob burst from his bosom.

"O God, if there is a God! have mercy upon these Thy dumb creatures who suffer such agony."

He stepped up to his horse, took his revolver out of the pouch, and then a merciful bullet ended the sufferings of the thirst-stricken animal at his feet.

"Steady, Bob, old man! Steady there!" he said brokenly, "I may have to do the same to you before long." And then, tearing off a long piece of dried ti-tree bark from one of the trees, he thrust it into the fire. Then, with the blazing torch in his left hand, and his pistol in his right, he tramped over the sand to the remaining cattle, and shot them dead one by one.

Then back to his digging again. A drink of thick, muddy water for his horse, and then with a dull sense of misery in his heart he led Bob up the bank and began the last stage of his ride home—home to his anæmic, complaining, shallow-brained wife and the weakly children who, instead of being

the consolation of his life in his misfortunes, were an added and ever-present source of misery and despair.

* * * * *

II

A few years before, Harrington had bought Tinandra Downs, and had stocked the run with three thousand head of store cattle; for half of which number he had paid, the remainder he had bought on long terms from a neighbouring squatter —a man who knew his sterling merits, and was confident that he (Harrington) would make Tinandra one of the best cattle stations in the far north. Fortune had smiled upon him from the first; for within two years came the discovery of the famous Palmer River goldfields, only a few hundred miles distant, and cattle and station properties doubled in value, for in less than half a year there were six thousand diggers on the field, and more came pouring in from the southern colonies by every steamer to Cooktown. New townships sprang suddenly into existence, provisions of all kinds brought an enormous price, and Harrington cleared off his debt to his squatter friend almost ere he could realise having done so, and that he had several thousands of pounds to the good as well. And his good luck stuck to

him, for it was attended by careful management, and every mob of fat cattle he despatched to the goldfield instead of sending them on a three-hundred league journey to Brisbane, meant another couple of thousand sovereigns.

Then he began to improve the head station—and to think of Myra, a girl whom he had once met in Sydney, and who sent him newspapers, and, once or twice, at long intervals, had written him letters. He had answered these letters with a secret hope that, if all went well with him, he would take another trip to Sydney, and then—well, he could at least ask her. If she said no, why, who was there to chaff him? He was not a communicative man, had very few intimate men friends, and the few women whom he knew were not the sort he could possibly talk to about a lady. Both his parents had died before he was ten years of age, leaving him utterly alone in the world. Born in a bush town, in the interior of New South Wales, he had turned to the bush and to the wide, open, grassy plains, as an infant would have turned to its mother in its distress; and the bush and the plains and the grey mountain ranges had taken him to their bosoms; and the silent, reserved boy became the resolute, hardy bushman, stock-rider, and then miner—a man fit and ready to meet the emergencies of his rough life. Of the outside world he was as ignorant as a child, as indeed

were most of the men with whom for many years he had associated. But there was nothing despicable in his ignorance; and when as time went on, and his improved circumstances threw him in contact with men and women of refinement and culture, he was quick to take advantage of such opportunities; but the honest, simple nature of the man always remained the same.

Before he was thirty, Harrington was known as one of the most experienced and fortunate overlander drovers in Australia, and he became as familiar with the long and lonely stock-route from the stations on the Gulf of Carpentaria to Sydney and Melbourne, in his many journeys, as if it were a main road in an English county.

At the conclusion of one of these tedious drives of seven months' duration, the brown-faced, quiet drover was asked by an acquaintance with whom he had business transactions, to spend the evening with him at his house. He went, and there met Myra Lyndon. He was attracted by her bright manner and smiling face, and when she questioned him about his life in the Far North, his adventures among the blacks, and the many perils of a drover's existence, he thought her the fairest and sweetest woman in the world. And Miss Myra Lyndon encouraged him in his admiration. Not that she cared for him in the least. She had not reached eight-and-twenty years of age to throw herself

away on a man who had no other ambition than to become a squatter and live amongst a lot of "horrid bellowing cattle." But he was nice to talk to, though terribly stupid about some things, and so she did not mind writing to him once or twice—it would reward him for the horse he had one day sent to her father with a lamely worded note, saying that it was one of a mob he had just bought at the saleyards, and as he had no use for a lady's hack, he thought that perhaps Miss Lyndon would be so kind as to accept it. Mr. Lyndon smiled as he read the note, he knew that drovers did not usually buy ladies' hacks; but being a man harassed to death with an expensive family, he was not disposed to discourage Harrington's attentions to Myra; though, having a conscience, he felt that Jack Harrington was too good a man for such a useless, empty-brained, and selfish creature as his eldest daughter.

So Harrington went back to his "bellowing bullocks," and then, having saved enough money, bought the very run he had so often wished he could buy; and "Jack" Harrington, the overlander, became "Mr." John Harrington, the pastoralist and owner of Tinandra Downs, and then the vision of Myra Lyndon's face came to him very often —now that he was so prosperous.

One day he told his overseer that he was going

to Sydney for a trip, and being a man of action, packed his valise, mounted his horse, and rode off on his journey of five hundred miles to the nearest seaport where he could take passage for Sydney.

For the first week or so after his arrival in the city, he "mooned" about doing nothing, and trying to pluck up courage enough to go to Myra Lyndon to ask her to be his wife. He had called several times upon her father and discussed business matters with him; but beyond inquiring after "Mrs. Lyndon and the Misses Lyndon," had said nothing further, and in a nervous, shamefaced manner had each time accepted Mr. Lyndon's invitation to "come and see the girls before he went back to the North," but had not had the courage to go. Next week, or the week after that, would do, he thought. If she said "No," he wouldn't feel it so much—once he was on his way North again in the old *Florence Irving;* he would put it off till just as he was ready to start. Then if she said "Yes," he would stay in Sydney as long as his love wished—a month—aye, six months, so long as she came back with him to Tinandra Downs. And Myra Lyndon, who knew from her father that her "bullock-driver admirer," as she had mockingly called him to her friends, was in Sydney, waited for him impatiently. A systematic course of jilting and being jilted had made her feel anxious as to her future, and gall and wormwood had come

to her now that her two younger sisters had married before her, and left her, as her somewhat acidulous-tongued mother said, "the Lyndon family wallflower." She meant to marry him, spend a year or so among the "beastly bellowing cattle," and then return to Sydney, where as Mrs. Harrington, the wealthy squatter's wife, she could enjoy herself thoroughly, snub some of the women she hated, and flirt with some of the men she liked.

Late one night, Harrington, sauntering from the theatre to his hotel, met, to his intense astonishment, a man he knew—had known years before when he (Harrington) was a drover and the other man—Walters—was a mounted trooper in the Queensland police.

They shook hands warmly, and then Walters said, "Come along with me, Jack, to the Water Police Station; we can have a yarn there. . . . Oh, yes, I'm a Sydney man now—a full-fledged inspector of police . . . tell you all about it by and by. But, push along, old man. One of my men has just told me that a woman who jumped off the Circular Quay and tried to drown herself, is lying at the station, and is not expected to pull through. Hallo! here's a cab! Jump in, Jack; there's some whisky in the sergeant's room, and after I've seen the cadaver—if she has cadavered —we'll have a right down good yarn."

The cab rattled through the now almost deserted street, and in a few minutes Harrington and his friend alighted at a small stone building overlooking the waters of Sydney Harbour. A water-policeman, who stood at the door under the big gas-lamp, saluted the inspector and then showed Harrington into the sergeant's room.

Ten minutes passed, and then Walters, accompanied by a big, stout, red-faced man, came in.

"Ha, here you are, old man. Jack, Dr. Parsons —the man who does the resuscitating and such silly business of this institution; Parsons, my old friend, Jack Harrington. Sergeant, where is that whisky?"

"Is the woman dead, doctor?" asked Harrington presently, as the sergeant's wife brought in a bottle of whisky and some glasses.

"No," replied the police doctor slowly, as he poured some whisky into his glass, "she is not dead; but she may not live much longer—a day or so perhaps. It all depends. Shock to the system."

"One of the usual sort, Parsons, I suppose?" inquired Walters—"left the baby on the wharf, with a written request for some 'kind Christian to love it,' eh?"

The fat doctor grunted. "You're a beast, Walters. There's no baby in the case. Here, give me ten shillings—you'll spend more than

that in drinks before you go to bed to-night. This girl *isn't* one of the usual sort. She's a lady—and she's been starving. So ante-up, you ex-nigger-shooting Queensland policeman; and I'll add another half-sov. Then perhaps your friend will give me something for her. And I'm not going to send her off to the hospital. I'm going to take her to some people I know, and ask them to keep her for a few days until she gets round."

Harrington put his hand in his pocket, and then in a nervous, diffident way, looking first at Walters and then at the doctor, put five sovereigns on the table.

"I'm pretty flush now, you know. . . . I'm not a plunger, but I shall be glad, doctor, if you will take that and give it to her. . . . I was almost starving myself once—*you* know, Walters, when I got the sack from the "Morning Star" Mine for plugging the English manager when he called me a 'damned colonial lout.'"

The fat-faced doctor looked steadily at him for a moment or two. Then he reached out his hand.

"You're a good fellow, Mr. Harrington. I'll take a sovereign or two. Come in here with me."

III

Harrington followed him into an adjoining room, where, upon a wicker-work couch was

reclining the figure of a young girl. Standing beside her was the police-sergeant's wife, who, as soon as the two men came in, quietly drew aside.

"Now, here I am back again, my dear child," said the doctor good-humouredly, "and here is a very old friend of mine, Mr. Jack Harrington; and we have come to cheer you up and tell you that you have two or three good friends. And we won't let any women or parsons come to you and worry you, and tell you that you have been a wicked girl, and ought to have thrown yourself upon God's mercy and all that sort of thing. So just drink that coffee, and then by and by we will take you to some people I know well, and you shall come and tell us in a day or two how sorry you are for being so foolish."

The girl's dark hazel eyes looked steadily at them both; then she put out a thin white hand.

"You are very kind to me. I know it was very wicked to try and kill myself, but I was so lonely, and . . . and I had not eaten anything since Wednesday . . . and I wanted to die." Then she covered her face and sobbed softly, whilst the doctor patted her on the shoulder and said—

"Don't worry, little girl; you are in good hands now. Never mind Mrs. Thornton and her unkindness. You are better away from her—isn't she, Mr. Harrington?"

Mr. Harrington, knowing nothing about Mrs. Thornton, promptly said "Oh, most certainly,' and the girl's eyes met his for a second, and a faint smile flushed upon her pale lips. The tall, bearded, and brown-faced man's face seemed so full of pity.

"Now you must go to sleep for an hour or two," said the doctor imperatively; "so now then, little girl, 'seepy-by, beddy-bo.' That's what *my* mother used to say to me."

Harrington followed the doctor out into the sergeant's room, where Inspector Walters, with his heels upon the table, was falling asleep.

"Sit down a moment, Mr. Harrington," said Dr. Parsons, taking up a book which the sergeant had left upon the table; "this is a sad case. Here is a girl, Nellie Alleyne, age 19, nursery governess to Mrs. Lavery-Thornton, of Waverly, jumped into the water off the Quay; rescued by Water-police Constables Casey and Boyce."

Harrington nodded.

"This girl has told me her story. She is alone and friendless in Sydney. She came out to Australia when she was seventeen, got a billet with this Mrs. Lavery-Thornton—who seems to be a perfect brute of a woman—suffered a two years' martyrdom, and then was dismissed from her situation with the large sum of twenty-two shillings in her pocket. Tried to get another

such position, but people wouldn't take her without a recommendation from her last place. The Thornton woman wouldn't give her one; said she was too independent. High-spirited girl with twenty-two shillings between her and starvation, wanders about from one registry office to another for a couple of weeks, living in a room in a Miller's Point slum; money all gone; pestered by brutes in the usual way, jumps into the water to end her miseries. Rough, isn't it?"

Harrington nodded. "Poor thing! I should like you, Dr. Parsons, to—to let her know that she *has* friends. Will you let me help. Fifty pounds or a hundred pounds won't hurt me . . . and I've been stone-broke myself. But a man can always peg along in the bush; and it's an awful thing for a child like that to be adrift in a big city."

The kind-hearted police doctor looked steadily into Harrington's face for a moment, then he said quietly—

"An awful thing indeed. But there are some good men in the world, Mr. Harrington, who are able and willing to save pure souls from destruction. You are one of them. Tom Walters and myself are both hard-up devils—we see a lot of misery, but can do nothing to alleviate it; a few shillings is all we can give."

Harrington rose, and his sun-tanned face flushed

as he drew out his cheque-book. "I never try to shove myself in, in such matters as these, doctor, but I should feel pleased if you will let me help."

Then he wrote out a cheque for fifty pounds, pushed it over to the doctor, said he thought it was getting late, and that he had better get back to his hotel.

Dr. Parsons gave the sleeping inspector a shake, and in a few words told him what Harrington had done.

"You're a dashed fool, old man," said Walters sleepily to Harrington; "most likely she'll blue your fifty quid, and then blackmail——"

The doctor's hand descended upon the inspector's shoulder. "Shut up, you beastly old wretch—do you think *all* women are alike. Come, now, let us have another nip and get away. Mr. Harrington is tired. Sergeant!"

The sergeant came to the door.

"Thompson, take good care of that young *lady*. We happen to know her. If she awakes before eight o'clock in the morning, tell her that she is to stay with your wife till I come to see her at nine o'clock. Any effects, sergeant?"

"Yes, sir," and the sergeant took out his note-book, "seven pawn tickets, five pennies, and a New Testament with 'Nellie Alleyne' written inside."

"Here, give me those tickets, I'll take care of them; and Thompson, if the newspaper fellows

come here to-night, say that the young lady fell over the wharf accidentally, and has gone home to her friends. See?"

"I see, sir," said Thompson, as the good-hearted doctor slipped half a sovereign into his hand.

Then the three men stepped out into the street and strolled up to the Royal Hotel, and sat down in the smoking-room, which was filled with a noisy crowd, some of whom soon saw Walters and called him away, leaving the doctor and Harrington by themselves.

"Better take this back, Mr. Harrington," and Dr. Parsons handed him his cheque. "Two or three pounds will be quite enough for the poor girl."

"Not I," said Harrington with a smile, "fifty pounds won't ruin me, as I said—and it may mean a lot to her, poor child. And I feel glad that I can help some one . . . some one who is all right, you know. Now I must be off. Good night, doctor."

Parsons looked at the tall manly figure as he pushed his way through the noisy crowd in the smoking-room, and then at the cheque in his hand. "Well, there's a good fellow. Single man, I'll bet; else he wouldn't be so good to a poor little devil of a stranded girl. Didn't even ask her name. May the Lord send him a good wife."

The Lord did not send Harrington a good wife; for the very next day he called upon Mrs. Lyndon,

and Mrs. Lyndon took good care that he should be left alone with Myra; and Myra smiled so sweetly at him, when with outstretched hands she came into the drawing-room, that he fatuously believed she loved him. And she of course, when he asked her to be his wife, hid her face on his shoulder, and said she could not understand why he could love *her*. Why, she was quite an old maid! Amy and Gwen were ever so much prettier than she, and she was sure that both Gwen and Amy, even though they were now both married, would feel jealous when they knew that big, handsome Jack Harrington had asked her to be his wife; and so on and so forth, as only the skilled woman of thirty, whose hopes of marriage are slipping by, knows how to talk and lie to an "eligible" man unused to women's ways. And Harrington kissed Myra's somewhat thin lips, and said—and believed—that he was the happiest man in Australia. Then Mrs. Lyndon came in, and, in the manner of mothers who are bursting with joy at getting rid of a daughter whose matrimonial prospects are looking gloomy, metaphorically fell upon Harrington's neck and wept down his back, and said he was robbing her of her dearest treasure, &c., &c. Harrington, knowing nothing of conventional women's ways, believed her, and married, for him, the most unsuitable woman in the world.

A week or so after his marriage he received a

letter from Dr. Parsons enclosing the cheque he had given him for Nellie Alleyne:—

"DEAR HARRINGTON,—Girl won't take the cheque. Has a billet—cashier in a restaurant. Says she is writing to you. She's true gold. You ought to marry her and take her away with you to your outlandish parts. Would ask her to marry me—if I could keep her; but she wouldn't have me whilst you are about. Always glad to see you at my diggings; whisky and soda and such, and a hearty welcome."

And by the same post came a letter from the girl herself—a letter that, simply worded as it was, sent an honest glow through his heart:—

"DEAR MR. HARRINGTON,—I shall never, never forget your kindness to me; as long as I live I shall never forget. Dr. Parsons tells me that you live in Queensland—more than a thousand miles from Sydney, and that you are going away soon. Please will you let me call on you before you go away? I shall be so unhappy if I do not see you again, because in a letter I *cannot* tell you how I thank you, how deeply grateful I am to you for your goodness and generosity to me.

"Yours very sincerely,

"HELEN ALLEYNE."

Harrington showed the letter to Myra, who bubbled over with pretty expressions of sympathy and wrote and asked her to call. Nellie did call, and the result of her visit was that when Harrington took his newly married wife to Tinandra Downs, she went with her as companion. And from the day that she entered the door of his house, Helen Alleyne had proved herself to be, as Dr. Parsons had said, "true gold." As the first bright years of prosperity vanished, and the drought and financial worries all but crushed Harrington under the weight of his misfortunes, and his complaining, irritable wife rendered his existence at home almost unbearable, her brave spirit kept his from sinking under the incessant strain of his anxieties. Mrs. Harrington, after her third child was born, had given up even the semblance of attending to the children, and left them to Nellie and the servants. She was doing quite enough, she once told her husband bitterly, in staying with him at such a horrible place in such a horrible country. But she nevertheless always went away to the sea-coast during the hottest months, and succeeded in having a considerable amount of enjoyment, leaving the children and Jack and Miss Alleyne to swelter through the summer at Tinandra Downs as best they could.

IV

It was nearly midnight as Harrington took down the slip-rails and led his horse through the paddock up to the house, which, except for a dimly burning lamp in the dining-room, was in darkness. The atmosphere was close and sultry, and the perspiration ran down his skin in streams as he gave his horse to the head-stockman, who was sitting on the verandah awaiting him.

"Terrible night, sir, but I'm thinking if it keeps on like this for another hour or two we'll get a big thunderstorm. 'Sugar-bag'" (one of the black boys) "was here just now and says that the ant-heaps about are covered with ants—that's a sure sign, sir."

"God send it so, Banks! If no rain comes within two days, you'll have to start away for Cleveland Bay with Mrs. Harrington and Miss Alleyne and the children. We must find horses somehow to take them there."

Before Banks led the horse away for a drink, he stopped.

"Miss Alleyne went to Canton Reef, sir, this morning with little Sandy. She ought to have been here before dark, but I expect the horses knocked up. There's a couple of cows with young calves there, so Sandy says, and Miss Alleyne said she would try and bring them in if I would let her

take Sandy. We've had no milk, sir, for the children since Tuesday, and Miss Alleyne said that you would be vexed. I would have gone myself, sir, but I couldn't well leave, and I know Miss Alleyne will manage—it's only fifteen miles, and Sandy says that the two cows and calves are pretty fat and can travel; there's a bit of feed at those waterholes about the Canton. Most likely she and the little black boy have yarded the cows at the Seven-mile Hut and are camping there for the night. But I'll start off now, sir. I've got Peter the Pig already saddled."

"Yes, yes, Banks, certainly. Why didn't you start long ago?"

"Mrs. Harrington said I must wait for you, sir," the man answered somewhat sullenly.

Harrington nodded. "Hurry up, Banks; but here, take a glass of grog first."

He watched the stockman disappear down the dusty track to the slip-rails, then he went inside, and sitting down at the table buried his face in his hands. Then, booted and dusty, and tired in mind and body, he slept.

An hour had passed, and no sound disturbed the hot oppressive silence of the night but the heavy breathing of the wearied man. Then through his dreamless slumber came the murmur of voices, and presently three figures walked quickly up from the milking-yard towards the house.

"He's asleep, miss," whispered Banks, "he's dog tired. But the news you have got for him will put fresh life into him. Now just you go to him, miss, and tell him, and then as soon as I have given them cows a drink, I'll bring you in some tea. Sandy, you little black devil, light a fire in the kitchen and don't make a noise, or I'll tan your hide, honest."

For a minute or so the girl stood in the doorway of the dining-room, holding a heavy saddle-pouch, in her hand, her frame trembling with emotion and physical exhaustion; and trying to speak. As soon as she could speak, she walked over to the sleeping man and touched him on the shoulder He awoke with a start just as she sank on her knees, and leaning her elbows on a chair beside him, burst into a fit of hysterical weeping. He waited for her to recover herself.

"Oh, I am so glad, so glad, Mr. Harrington! Now you need not give up Tinandra . . . and the drought doesn't matter . . . and oh, I thank God for His goodness that He has let me help you at last!" She broke off with a choking sob, and then, with streaming eyes, placed her hand in his.

Harrington lifted her up and placed her on a couch. "Lie there, Miss Alleyne. I will call Mrs. Harrington——"

She put out her hand beseechingly. "Please

don't, Mr. Harrington. She is not at all strong, and I think I made her very angry this morning by going away to look for the milkers. . . . But look, Mr. Harrington, look inside the saddle pouch." Then she sat up, and her eyes burnt with feverish expectation, "Quick, quick, please," and then she began to laugh wildly, but clenching her hands tightly together she overcame her hysteria, and attempted to speak calmly.

"I shall be better in a minute . . . empty it out on the table, please . . . Banks says it is another outcrop of the old Canton Reef."

Harrington picked up the saddle-pouch, and putting it on the table, turned up the lamp, and unfastened the straps; it was filled with pieces of rough weather-worn quartz thickly impregnated with gold. The largest piece contained more gold than quartz, and an involuntary cry of astonishment and admiration burst from his lips as he held it to the light.

Nellie's eyes sparkled with joy. "Isn't it lovely! I can't talk, my lips are so dry."

Harrington dashed outside to the verandah filled a glass from the canvas water-bag hanging from a beam overhead, and gave it to the exhausted girl.

"Now don't you attempt to speak for five minutes."

"No, I won't," she said, with a faint smile, as she

drank off the cold water—and then at once began to tell him of her discovery.

"Sandy and I found the two cows and calves a mile this side of the Canton Reef in a gully, but before we could head them off they had got away into the ironbark ridges. Sandy told me to wait, and galloped after them. I followed him to the top of the first ridge, and then pulled up, and there, right under my horse's feet I saw a small 'blow' of quartz sticking up out of the baked ground, and I saw the gold in it quite plainly. Of course I was wildly excited, and jumped off. The stone was quite loose and crumbly, and I actually pulled some pieces away with my hands, and when I saw the thick yellow gold running all through it I sat down and cried. Then I became so frightened that Sandy might not find me again, for it would be dark in another hour, and so I ran up and down along the ridge, listening for the sound of his stockwhip. And then I went back towards the outcrop of the reef again, and half-way down I picked up that big lump—it was half buried in the ground. . . . And oh, Mr. Harrington, all that ridge is covered with it . . . I could have brought away as much again, but Sandy had no saddle-pouch . . . and I was dying to come home and tell you."

She breathed pantingly for a few minutes.

"It was nearly dark when Sandy came back.

He had run the cattle on to a camp about three miles away. . . . I don't know which pleased me most, to get the cows so that poor Mable and Harry can have some milk in the morning, or the gold. . . . Banks met us half-way from the Seven-mile Hut, and took me off my horse and put me in front of him."

Banks came to the door, carrying a tray with a cup of tea and some food. "Here ye are, Miss Alleyne; ye're a born stockman, an' a prospector, an'—God bless you, miss, *you've brought the rain as well.*"

For as the rough, hairy-faced stockman began to speak, a low rumbling sound of thunder smote the silence of the night, followed by a loud appalling clap, and then another, and another, and presently a cooling blast of wind came through the open door, and stirred and shook the venetian blinds hanging outside. Banks almost dropped the tea-tray, and then darting outside, dashed his cabbage-tree hat on the ground, and began to dance as the first heavy drops of the coming deluge fell upon his head.

In less than ten minutes, Harrington, with silent joy in his heart, was standing at the doorway, watching the descending torrents of rain—that rain which to his bushman's heart meant more than all the gold which lay beneath the earth. He had, as it first began to fall, rushed into his

wife's bedroom, and kissed her and the terrified children.

"The rain has come, Myra, thank God," he said, and then he added quietly, "I have more good news for you in the morning."

Mrs. Harrington said she was quite aware of the rain having come—the disgusting noise of the thunder had made the children scream. Had Miss Alleyne come back? And brought the cows? His other good news could keep till the morning.

Harrington turned away from her with a feeling of dulled resentment. *He* knew what the girl had suffered, and his wife's heartlessness cut him to the quick.

As he stood watching Banks and the black boys filling every available tank and cask on the station from the downpour off the roof, Nellie rose from the couch on which she had been lying, and touched his arm timidly.

"Don't you believe in God's goodness *now*, Mr. Harrington? See, He has sent the rain, and He has granted my daily prayer to Him that I, too, might help you. And Banks says that this is not a passing thunderstorm, but that the drought has broken up altogether—for see, the wind is from the south."

Harrington raised her hand to his lips. "I have always tried to believe in God and in His mercy, Miss Alleyne."

"Not always, Mr. Harrington," she said softly. "Don't you remember when all the Big Swamp mob were bogged and dying, that you said that if He would not hear the moans and see the agonies of the beasts He had created, that He would not listen to the prayers of human beings who were not suffering as they suffered? And to-day, as Sandy and I rode along to the Canton Reef, I prayed again and again, and always when I passed a dying beast I said, '*O God! have mercy upon these Thy dumb creatures who suffer much agony.*'"

Harrington's chest heaved. "And I prayed as you prayed, Miss Alleyne; but I said, '*O God! if there is a God.*'"

She put out her hand to him and her dark eyes filled with tears. "He has answered our prayers. . . . And now, good night. . . . I wish I could go out into the rain; I feel I could dance for joy. . . . Mr. Harrington, *do* let me go to the Canton Reef with you to-morrow. Everything will be all right to-morrow, won't it? But there, how thoughtless I am. . . . I am going to milk those two cunning cows till they are dry; poor little Harry does so want some fresh milk. Good night, Mr. Harrington; I shall sleep happily to-night—everything will be all right to-morrow."

At breakfast-time next morning the rain was still falling steadily, and Mrs. Harrington decided to join her husband at the morning meal.

Harrington rode up to the door and smiled brightly at his wife. "Waiting for me, dear? I won't be long. The river is running now, Myra—running after two years! I'm off to Miss Alleyne's reef as soon as I've had a bit of tucker. Where is she?"

"In bed, I presume," said Mrs. Harrington acidulously. "She might have remembered that I was very much upset last night by that horrible thunder, and have risen earlier and attended to the children."

A look of intense disgust came over her husband's face.

"Myra, the girl was done-up, dead beat! Won't you go and see if she is able to get up?"

Mrs. Harrington rose stiffly. "Oh, certainly, if you wish it. But I think it is a great mistake. She really ought to have considered the children, and——"

The head stockman's wife met her at the door, and looking past her mistress, spoke to Harrington in terrified tones—

"Miss Alleyne is dead, sir!"

Harrington sprang from his chair. "Dead, Mrs. Banks!"

"Yes, sir. I was only just in time. She on'y sez, 'Tell Mr. Harrington that I am so glad that everythink will be all right now.' An' then she smiled, sir, and sez as I was to kiss Master Harry

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and Miss Mabel for her, as she was agoin'. And then she sez, 'Isn't God good to send the rain, Mrs. Banks? Everything will be all right now for poor Mr. Harrington—rain and gold.' Then she just laid quiet for a minute, an' when I looked at her face again, I saw she was dead."

* * * * *

A year later, Jack Harrington, again one of the wealthiest cattle men in North Queensland, and the owner of one of the richest gold mines in the colony, was riding home to his station. Behind him he heard the clatter and clash of the twenty-stamper battery that on the "Canton Ridge" was pounding him in so many thousands of pounds a month; before him lay the sweeping grassy downs and thickly timbered creeks of a now smiling country. His wife and children had long before returned to the cooler South, and in his heart was a great loneliness. Not, perhaps, for them, but because of the memory of the girl whose prayer to the Almighty had been answered, and who was resting on the bank of the Gilbert under the shade of a big Leichhardt tree.

Jack Renton

SOME yarns of an exceedingly tough and Munchausen-like character have been spun and printed by men of their adventures in Australian waters or the South Seas, but an examination of such stories by any one with personal knowledge of the Pacific and Australasia has soon, and very deservedly so, knocked the bottom out of a considerable number of them. Yet there are stories of South Sea adventure well authenticated, which are not a whit less wonderful than the most marvellous falsehoods that any man has yet told, and the story of what befell John Renton is one of these. A file of the *Queenslander* (the leading Queensland weekly newspaper) for 1875 will corroborate his story; for that paper gave the best account of his adventures in one of their November (1875) numbers, and the story was copied into nearly every paper in Australasia.

Like Harry Bluff, John Renton "when a boy left his friends and his home, o'er the wild ocean waves all his life for to roam." Renton's home was in Stromness, in the Orkneys, and he shipped on board a vessel bound to Sydney, in 1867, as an ordinary seaman, he then being a lad of eighteen. When in Sydney he got about among the boarding-houses, in sailor-town, and one morning woke up on the forecastle of the *Reynard* of Boston, bound on a cruise for guano among the South Pacific Islands.

Renton had been crimped, and finding himself where he was, bothered no more about it, but went cheerfully to work, not altogether displeased at the prospect of new adventures, which would enable him to by and by go back to the old folks with plenty of dollars, and a stock of startling yarns to reel off. He was a steady, straightforward lad, though somewhat thoughtless at times, and resolved to be a steady, straightforward man. The vessel first called into the Sandwich Islands, and there shipped a gang of Hawaiian natives to help load the guano, then she sailed away to the southward for McKean's Island, one of the Phœnix Group, situated about lat. 3° 35′ S. and long. 174° 20′ W.

On board the *Reynard* was an old salt known to all hands as "Boston Ned." He had been a whaler in his time, had deserted, and spent some years

beachcombing among the islands of the South Seas, and very soon, through his specious tongue, he had all hands wishing themselves clear of the "old hooker" and enjoying life in the islands instead of cruising about, hazed here and there and everywhere by the mates of the *Reynard*, whose main purpose in life was to knock a man down in order to make him "sit up." Presently three or four of the hands became infatuated with the idea of settling on an island, and old Ned, nothing loth, undertook to take charge of the party if they would make an attempt to clear from the ship. The old man had taken a fancy to young Renton, and the youngster, when the idea was imparted to him, fell in with it enthusiastically; for he was exasperated with the treatment he had received on board the guanoman —the afterguard of an American guano ship are usually a rough lot. The ship was lying on and off the land, there being no anchorage, and before the plan had been discussed more than a few hours, the men, five in all, determined to put it into execution.

A small whaleboat was towing astern of the vessel in case the wind should fall light and the ship drift in too close to the shore. It was a fine night, with a light breeze, and there was, they thought, a good chance of getting to the southward, to one of the Samoan group, where they could settle, or by shipping on board a trading

schooner they might later on strike some other island to their fancy.

By stealth they managed to stow in the boat a couple of small breakers of water, holding together sixteen gallons, and the forecastle bread barge with biscuits enough for three meals a day per man for ten days. They managed also to steal four hams, and each man brought pipes, tobacco, and matches. A harpoon with some line, an old galley frying-pan, mast, sail and oars, and some blankets completed the equipment. For they took no compass, though they made several attempts to get at one slung in the cabin, and tried at first to take one out of the poop binnacle; but the officer of the watch on deck was too wide awake for them to risk that, and the cabin compass was screwed to the roof close to the skipper's berth; and so the old man who was their leader, old sailor and whaler as he was, actually gave up the idea of taking a compass, and these people without more ado, one night slipped over the side into the whaleboat, cut the painter, and by daylight the boat was out of sight of land and of the ship. They were afloat upon the Pacific, running six or seven miles before a north-east breeze and expecting to sight land in less than a week, and were already anticipating the freedom and luxury of island life in store for them.

Three days later it fell calm, and they had to

take to the oars. The sun was intensely hot, the water a sheet of glass reflecting back upon them the ball of fire overhead. Now and again a cats-paw would ripple across the plain of water, but there were no clouds, there was no sight of land. They kept on pulling. For three, for four days—a week—for ten days—they tugged at the oars, except when a favouring breeze came. The water was reduced to a few pints, the food to a few days' half-rations. Their limbs were cramped so that they could not move from their places in the boat, their bodies were becoming covered with sores; and the wind had now died away entirely, the sea was without a ripple, and for ever shone above them the fierce, relentless sun.

Gradually it had dawned upon them that they were lost—that perhaps they had run past Samoa. The first eagerness of their adventure gave place to despair, and by degrees their despair grew to madness of a more awful kind.

On the fifteenth day there appeared to the south and east a low, dark-grey cloud. "Land at last!" was the unspoken thought in each man's heart as he looked at his comrade, but feared to voice his hope. And presently the cloud grew darker and more clearly defined, and one of the men—the next oldest to the author of all their miseries—fell upon his weak and trembling knees, and raised his hands in thankfulness and prayer to the Almighty

Alas! it was not land, but the ominous forerunner of the fierce and sweeping mid-equatorial gale which lay veiled behind. In less than half an hour it came upon and smote them with savage fury, and the little boat was running before a howling gale and a maddened, foam-whipped sea.

And then it happened that, ill and suffering as he was from the agonies of hunger and thirst, the heroic nature of old "Boston Ned" came out, and his bold sailor's heart cheered and encouraged his wretched, despairing companions. All that night, and for the greater part of the following day, he stood in the stern-sheets, grasping the bending steer-oar as the boat swayed and surged along before the gale, and constantly watching lest she should broach to and smother in the roaring seas; the others lay in the bottom, feebly baling out the water, encouraged, urged, and driven to that exertion by the gallant old American seaman.

Towards noon the wind moderated, in the afternoon it died away altogether, and again the boat lay rising and falling to the long Pacific swell, and "Boston Ned" flung his exhausted frame down in the stern-sheets and slept.

Again the blood-red sun leapt from a sea of glassy smoothness—for the swell had subsided during the night—and again the wretched men looked into each other's dreadful faces and mutely

asked what was to be done. How should they head the boat? Without a compass they might as well steer one way as another, for none of them knew even approximately the course for the nearest land; search the cloudless vault of blue above, or scan the shimmering sea-rim till their aching eyes dropped from out their hollowing sockets, there was no clue.

Twenty days out the last particle of food and water had been consumed, and though the boat was now steering as near westward as old Ned could judge, before a gentle south-east trade, madness and despair were coming quickly upon them, and on the twenty-third day two of the five miserable creatures began to drink copiously of salt water—the drink of Death.

Renton, though he had suffered to the bitter full from the agonies of body and mind endured by his shipmates, did not yield to this temptation; and by a merciful providence remained sane enough to turn his face away from the water. But as he lay crouched in a heap in the bottom of the boat, with a silent prayer in his heart to his Creator to quickly end his sufferings, he heard "Boston Ned" and the only remaining sane man except himself muttering hoarsely together and looking sometimes at him and sometimes at the two almost dying men who lay moaning beside him. Presently the man who was talking to Ned pulled out of his blanket—

which lay in the stern-sheets—a razor, and turning his back to Renton began stropping it upon the sole of his boot, and even "Boston Ned" himself looked with awful eyes and blood-baked twitching lips upon the youngster.

The lad saw what was coming, and as quickly as possible made his way forward and sat there, with his eyes fixed upon the two men aft, waiting for the struggle which he thought must soon begin. All that day and the night he sat and watched, determined to make a fight for the little life which remained in him, and Ned and the other man at times still muttered and eyed him wolfishly.

And so, on and on, these seeming outcasts of God's mercy sailed before the warm breath of the south-east trade wind, above them the blazing tropic sun, around them the wide, sailless expanse of the blue Pacific unbroken in its dreadful loneliness except for a wandering grey-winged booby or flocks of whale-birds floating upon its gentle swell, and within their all but deadened hearts naught but grim despair and a dulled sense of coming dissolution.

As he sat thus, supporting his swollen head upon his skeleton hands, Renton saw something astern, moving slowly after the boat—something that he knew was waiting and following for the awful deed to be done, so that *it* too might share in the dreadful feast.

Raising his bony arm, he pointed towards the moving fin. To him a shark meant no added horror or danger to their position, but possibly deliverance. "Boston Ned" and the other man first looked at the coming shark, and then with sunken eyes again turned to Renton. Voices none of them had, and the lad's parched tongue could not articulate, but with signs and lip movements he tried to make the other two men understand.

No shark hook had they; nor, if they had had one, had they anything with which to bait it. But Renton, crawling aft, picked up the harpoon, placed it in "Boston Ned's" hands, and motioned to him to stand by. Then with eager, trembling hands he stripped from his legs the shreds of trousers which remained on them, and, sitting upon the gunwale of the boat, hung one limb over and let it trail in the water.

Three times the shark came up, and thrice Ned prepared to strike, but each time the grim ranger of the seas turned aside as it caught sight of the waiting figure with weapon poised above. But at last hunger prevailed, and, swimming slowly up till within a few yards of the boat, it made a sudden rush for the human bait, missed it, and the harpoon, deftly darted by the old ex-whaler, clove through its tough skin and buried itself deep into its body between the shoulders.

It took the worn-out, exhausted men a long time to haul alongside and despatch the struggling monster, which, says Renton, was ten feet in length.

Then followed shark's flesh and shark's blood, some of the former, after the first raw meal, being cooked on a fire made of the biscuit barge upon a wet blanket spread in the bottom of the boat. The hot weather, however, soon turned the remaining portion putrid, but two or three days later came God's blessed rain, and gave them hope and life again. They managed to save a considerable quantity of water, and, though the shark's flesh was in a horrible condition, they continued to feed upon it *until the thirty-fifth day.*

On this day they saw land, high and well wooded; but now the trade-wind failed them, and for the following two days the unfortunate men contended with baffling light airs, calms, and strong currents. At last they got within a short distance of the shore, and sought for a landing-place through the surrounding surf.

Suddenly four or five canoes darted out from the shore. They were filled with armed savages, whose aspect and demeanour warned old Ned that he and his comrades were among cannibals. Sweeping alongside the boat, the savages seized the white men, who were all too feeble to resist, or even move, put them into their canoes, and conveyed

them on shore, fed them, and treated them with much apparent kindness. Crowds of natives from that part of the island—which was Malayta, one of the Solomon Group—came to look at them, and one man, a chief, took a fancy to Renton, and claimed him as his own especial property.

Renton never saw the rest of his companions again, for they were removed to the interior of the island—probably sold to some of the bush tribes, the "man-a-bush," as the coastal natives called them. Their fate is not difficult to guess, for the people of Malayta were then, as they are now, cannibals.

On August 7, 1875, the Queensland labour recruiting schooner *Bobtail Nag* was cruising off the island, trading for yams, and her captain heard from some natives who came alongside that there was a white man living ashore in a village about ten miles distant. The skipper of the *Bobtail Nag* at once offered to pay a handsome price if the man was brought on board, and at the cost of several dozen Birmingham steel axes and some tobacco poor Renton's release was effected. He told his rescuers that the people among whom he had lived had taken a great fancy to him, and had treated him with great kindness.

If the reader will look at a chart of the South

Pacific, he will see, among the Phœnix Group, the position of McKean's Island; two thousand miles distant, westward and southward, is the island of Malayta, upon which Renton and his companions in misery drifted.

Sarréo

"WELL, there's niggers an' niggers, some just as good as any white man," said Mr. Thomas Potter as he, the second mate of the island-trading barque *Reconnaisance*, and Denison the supercargo, walked her short, stumpy poop one night, "though when I was before the mast I couldn't stand one of 'em bunking too close to me—not for a long time. But after a while I found out that a Kanaka or a Maori is better than the usual run of the paint-scrubbing Jack Dog who calls himself a sailorman nowadays. Why, I've never seen a native sailor yet as was dirty in his habits—they're too fond o' the water. Look at these Rotumah chaps aboard here—if there's a calm they'll jump overboard and take a swim instead of turning in when it's their watch below. Bah, white sailors ain't worth feeding in this Island trade—lazy, dirty, useless brutes; a Kanaka is worth three of any one of 'em. Did you notice

that photograph in my cabin—that one showing a ship's company standing on deck?"

"Yes, I did," replied Denison.

"Well, that's the crew of the *Fanny Long*, and amongst 'em is a fellow I'm goin' to tell you about —a chap named Sarréo. We had that picture taken in Hobart after we had come back from a sperm whaling cruise. We had been very lucky, and the skipper and owners had all our photographs taken in a group. I was second mate, and this Sarréo was one of the boatsteerers. Him and me had been shipmates before, once in the old *Meteor* barque, nigger-catching for the Fiji planters, and once in a New Bedford sperm whaler, and he had taken a bit of a liking to me, so whenever I got a new ship he generally shipped too.

"Well, I was tired of whaling; I had two ribs broke on that cruise in the *Fanny Long*, by a boat being stove in by a whale. So after I had got my money I walked out of the office, thinking of going to Sydney by the steamboat, when up comes Sarréo.

"'Got your dollars, Sarréo?' I says.

"'Yes,' he answers. 'What you goin' to do now, Mr. Potter?'

"'Going to Sydney to look for another ship.'

"'All right,' he says quietly. 'I come too. I don' want to go whalin' no more.'

"Sure enough, when I went on board the steamer there he was for'ard sitting on his chest, smoking his pipe, an' waiting for me.

"In Sydney there was a fine big lump of a schooner just fitting out for a trading cruise to the Solomon Islands, and I happened to know the skipper, who worked it for me with the owners and I got the berth of chief mate; and Sarréo (who used to come every day to the place I was staying at to ask me not to forget him) was shipped as an A.B.

"What sort of a looking man? Well, he was a short, square-built chap, with a chest like a working bullock. He was rather darker than a Samoan or a Tahiti man, owing to a seafaring life, and had straight, black hair. He only spoke as a rule when he was spoken to, and kept himself pretty much aloof from the rest of the hands, though he wasn't by any means sulky."

"Where did he hail from?" Denison inquired.

"Ah, now you're asking, sir. There was a beast of a supercargo—I beg pardon, sir, for forgetting myself—a reg'lar flash, bullying pig of a fellow, with us that trip. He put on as many airs as if he owned the whole blooming Pacific. Well, one day he was straightening up his trade-room, and calls for a couple of hands to help, and the skipper sent Sarréo and another native sailor to him. We were then lying at anchor in Marau Sound, in the

Solomons, and the sun was hot enough to blister the gates o' hell, and presently the supercargo comes on deck and slings his fat, ugly carcase into a deck chair under the awning and says—

"'That's a smart fellow, that Sarréo, Potter. Where does he come from?'

"Now I didn't know, and said so; so Mr. Supercargo grunts and says that he'd ask him himself. Presently up comes Sarréo and the other native—they were going for'ard for their dinner.

"'Here, I say you,' said the supercargo to Sarréo, touching him on the calf of the leg with his foot as he was passing, 'what island you belong to, eh?'

"Sarréo turned like lightning, and I caught a sight of his face. He had dark, deep-set eyes, and they seemed to spit fire at the fat brute in the chair, and his two brown hands shut tight; but he said nothing, not a blessed word, only looked as if all the rest of his body was turned to stone. He stood like that for about ten seconds or so, then he bent his head close to the other man's face and put his two clenched fists out behind him.

"'Here, Sarréo,' I says, collaring him by one arm, 'what's all these gymnastics? What's the matter?'

"He pushed me aside as if I was a feather, then he straightens himself up sudden, and, lookin' at the supercargo, spits on the deck at his feet.

"'You dog,' he says, 'when we get ashore I will fight you!'

"'Warby,' that was the supercargo's name, was no cur, whatever else he was, but though he seemed mighty sick when he heard Sarréo call him a dog, he jumped up at once.

"'You damned Kanaka swine! You're drunk! You've been sneaking a bottle of gin in the trade-room, an' I'll give you a pounding,' he says.

"Then before any one could interfere they were at it, and in less than a couple of minutes Sarréo had the supercargo by the throat, lifted him off his feet, and dashes him down on the poop. He lay there stunned, an' I tell you, mister, I was mighty pleased, for we all hated him for his beastly bullyin' ways, and his foul talk. So none of us rushed at him too violently to pick him up. Presently up comes the skipper and orders me to put Sarréo in irons, though I could see he didn't half like doing it. But it had to be done, and I had to do it. However, Sarréo held out his hands to me as quiet as a lamb, and I led him for'ard and told him to keep a stiff upper lip; the captain, I knew, would let him loose again the next morning. He nodded his head quietly and said, 'All right, Mr. Potter. But when we get ashore *I mus' kill that man.*'

"'Why, Sarréo,' I said, 'you mustn't talk like that, you've nearly cracked his skull as it is.

Don't you go on that tack, or it'll be worse for you.'

"He nods again. 'I know. But I have been look for that man for more'n five year.'

"'Why, do you know him?'

"'Yes, I know him *now*. When I see him roll up his shirt-sleeve in the trade-room, an' I see some tattoo mark on his arm, I know him.'

"Of course I asked him what the supercargo had done to him, but he wouldn't tell me any more. So, telling one of the hands to give him his pipe and tobacco, I went aft again and told the skipper that there seemed to be an old grudge between the two men.

"'Like enough,' says the skipper. 'That fellow Warby is the two ends and bight of a howling blackguard. He was only appointed to this ship at the last moment, or else I would have bucked against his coming aboard. He's got a bad name.'

"Warby lay in his bunk for the rest of the day, but in the evening he came on deck and said to the skipper roughly—

"'What are you going to do with that damned nigger?'

"'Keep him in irons for a day or two, I suppose. What more can I do?'

"Warby looked at him for a moment, then he says, with a sneer, that in some ships the captain

would have tied such a fellow up and given him six dozen.

"'No doubt,' says the skipper, looking him full in his ugly face, 'no doubt, especially in the sort of ships you've sailed in. But nothing like that is going to happen aboard this hooker.'

"The supercargo muttered something under his breath and turned away. Next morning, however, when we were at breakfast, he asked the captain how long he meant to keep Sarréo in irons.

"'Till after breakfast.'

"Warby jumped up in a rage and said that he protested against such a man being given his liberty. 'Why, he'll murder me,' he says at last with a white look in his face.

"The skipper laughed. 'You make too much of the business, Mr. Warby. Why, he is one of the best and quietest men aboard. If you hadn't kicked him and then swore at him, he wouldn't have tackled you. And I'm not going to keep him in irons—that's flat.'

"After breakfast I went up for'ard to take the irons off Sarréo. He was sitting against the windlass and smoking.

"'Here, Sarréo,' I said, 'I've come to take off your bracelets; but you must promise not to have any more rows with the supercargo; if you won't promise, then the captain says he'll have to keep

you in irons until we get to Fiji, and then send you to jail.'

"He promised, and from the quiet, soft manner in which he spoke, I felt sure he was over his burst of passion, and was feeling a bit funky over it. However, he turned-to very quietly, and was soon sent ashore with a watering party, he being in charge of the boat which was manned by native sailors. When he came back with the first lot of casks he told me that the bush around the watering-place was full of pigeons. As soon as the captain heard this he said he would go ashore and shoot some, and Mr. Warby said he would like to join him.

"So off they went—skipper, supercargo, and Sarréo and his boat's crew. We on board soon heard the two guns firing, and were smacking our chops at the thought of pigeon stew for supper. I did not expect to see them back until about supper-time, knowing that the boat had to tow the casks off to the ship, which lay about half a mile from the beach. But about four o'clock I saw the boat pushing off in a deuce of a hurry, and then pull like mad for the ship. Knowing that there was no danger from natives at that part of the island, I couldn't make it out, but in a few minutes the boat dashes up alongside, and looking over the side I saw that Sarréo was sitting beside the captain, in between him and Mr. Warby; his

eyes were closed, and I thought he was dead at first.

"We had him lifted up on deck and then carried into the cabin in a brace of shakes, and I saw that he had a bullet wound in his shoulder; the ball had gone clean through. Then the skipper, who was never much of a talker, told me that Mr. Warby had shot the man accidentally. Of course I looked at Warby. His face was very pale, but his eyes met mine without flinching.

"It didn't take the captain long to dress the wound, and half an hour later, when I came below again, Sarréo was sitting up on some cushions in the transoms smoking one of the captain's Manilas, and looking as if nothing had happened. He smiled when he saw me and put out his hand.

"'I'm all right, Mr. Potter,' he said; 'not going to die this time.'

"I was just about to ask him how the thing happened, when Robertson—that was our skipper's name—called me into his room. He was as solemn as a judge. Closing his cabin door, he said, 'Sarréo will get over it all right, but the business is an ugly one; to cut it short, I believe that it was no accident, but that Warby tried to murder the poor fellow.'

"Then he told me what had occurred. Leaving the rest of the boat's crew to fill the water casks, they set out to shoot pigeons; Sarréo went with

them to pick up and carry the birds. About an hour later they saw a wild boar rush by them. Robertson fired both barrels at it and wounded it, but it didn't stop. Warby had one barrel empty. He at once loaded with ball, and the three men gave chase, Sarréo leading, Warby following him close. On reaching some high grass at the river bank Sarréo plunged into it; then, a few seconds later, Robertson heard Warby call out that he saw the animal lying down, and fired. The captain was a short distance behind, but he and Warby reached the spot together, and there, sure enough, lying in the long grass, was the wounded boar, and Sarréo beside it, with the blood pouring from his shoulder. He was sitting up, supporting himself on his left hand. The skipper assisted him to his feet, and Warby tried to help, but Sarréo turned on him and cursed him, and said that he (Warby) had tried to murder him. The supercargo swore that he had not seen him when he fired, but further talk was cut short by Sarréo going faint through loss of blood, so they carried him to the boat.

"That was the story so far, and Robertson asked me what I thought of it.

"Now I had been shipmates with Sarréo off and on for a matter of five or six years, and I never knew him to tell a lie; but at the same time I couldn't think Warby would be such a brute as

to try and murder the man in cold blood. The skipper, however, took a very black view of the matter, and told me that if we met a man-of-war he would put Warby in irons, signal for a boat, and hand him over on a charge of attempted murder. Then we went out into the main cabin and sat down, and Robertson told the steward to call the supercargo.

"Warby came below at once. He gave a quick glance at Sarréo, then at the skipper and myself, and sat down quietly. In less than a minute the captain told him of his suspicions and what he intended doing if we met a man-of-war.

"I thought Warby would bluster and blaspheme in his usual way; but he didn't. He listened in silence. Then he rose and put his hands on the cabin table, and said—

"'Before God, I swear to you both that I am innocent. I did not fire at that man; I did not even see him again after he disappeared into the grass—as the Almighty is my judge, I did not. . . . I did mean to take it out of Sarréo for nearly breaking my skull the other day; but then I remembered afterwards that he had cause to hate me, and I was only waiting for a chance to ask him to make it up. And I say again that I am no cowardly murderer; when I fired, I fired at the boar or what I honestly thought was the boar, struggling in the grass. You can put me in irons

now if you like; or shut me up in my cabin. I'm not going to sit down at the same table with men who suspect me of attempted murder.'

"There was something in his voice which made us believe him, and then he took a couple of turns up and down the cabin deck, and stepped up to the wounded man.

"'Sarréo, I did you a bad turn a long time ago; but I'm sorry for it now—I have been sorry for it ever since. But I did not know where to find you, and I would not have known you yesterday if you hadn't looked into my face and spoken. It's ten years since that day, Sarréo.'

"The wounded man looked up, searching-like, into Warby's face all the time he was speaking; then his big black eyes drooped again, but he made no answer. So then Warby went on again, talking to the lot of us.

"'I was supercargo on the *Manola* brig, and Sarréo here was one of the hands. One day, in Apia harbour, a bag of dollars was stolen out of my cabin. The steward next morning said he had seen Sarréo ashore at one of the dance houses spending money very freely. The captain and I burst open his chest, and we found about twenty Mexican dollars among his clothes. Now, in the bag which had been stolen there were nearly five hundred Mexican dollars. Sarréo swore he had not stolen the money and that all the money he

had spent on shore was five dollars, which he had brought with him from San Francisco. But the skipper and I believed he was the thief, and to make him own up and tell us where the rest of the dollars were, we flogged him. Then we put him in irons and kept him in irons for a week. He still swore he had not taken the money, and I, believing he was lying, gave him another thrashing on my own account. That night he got overboard and swam ashore, and we gave the money up for lost. Well, about a week after this, when the steward was ashore, the mate and I decided to make a thorough search of *his* cabin. We found nothing there, but we did in the pantry —we found the missing bag of dollars, all but the twenty which he had put into Sarréo's chest— stowed away in the bottom of half a barrel of flour."

"As soon as Sarréo heard this, the poor fellow almost began to cry, and said, 'I told you, Mr. Warby, I no steal that money.'

"'No, Sarréo, I know you didn't—that is, I knew it when the steward owned up to stealing it; and told us afterward that he took twenty dollars out of the bag, and, seeing your chest lying open in the deck-house, he slipped in when no one was about and put the money among the clothes at the bottom.'

"Sarréo sighed, pleased-like, and then his brown face lit up.

"The big supercargo came a bit nearer to him, and then held out his hand.

"'Look here, Sarréo! The day before yesterday I was wrong, but you got my blood up; and I am sorry, very sorry, for the wrong I did you on board the *Manola;* but so help me God, Sarréo, I *did not* fire at you.'

"Sarréo's eyes seemed to look right through the white man; then they turned towards the skipper and me.

"'*I* believe you, Mr. Warby,' said the skipper, coming up and shaking hands with the supercargo.

"And I believed him too, for he looked terribly distressed and cut up, so I shook hands with him too.

"Then Sarréo put out his big brown tattooed hand.

"'And me too, Mr. Warby.'

"The supercargo pressed it gently, so as not to hurt Sarréo's shoulder, then he almost ran past us on deck.

"Well, from that time out, that man Warby changed, and he looked after Sarréo all the time he was laid up, as if he had been his own brother instead of a Kanaka chap before the mast.

"After leaving Marau Sound we stood to the northward, being bound to Bougainville Island. It took us more than a month to get there, and by that time Sarréo was as well and strong as ever

he was, and me and the skipper had got quite chummy with the supercargo, for we found out that he had a lot of good points about him. You see, mister, ten or twelve years ago the Solomon Group was the place to show what a man was made of—as far as that goes it's not much altered since. If you don't die of fever you're pretty sure to get knocked on the head and go down the nigger's gullets—and this chap Warby had rare pluck. He never ran a boat's crew into danger, but would take any risks himself, and somehow we had cruised right up from Marau Sound to the north end of Bougainville without losing a man, or having more than a few arrows or shots fired at the boats.

"Just when we were about to brace up to round Bouka Island, and being about three miles off the land, we sighted the hull of a vessel ashore on the beach of a small bay. We stood in for a mile or so and saw that there was a native village at the head of the bay, and that the vessel was a schooner of about a hundred tons. There were no signs of any boats and she seemed to be stripped of both running and standing gear.

"We manned and armed two boats—one, with Mr. Warby in charge, being the landing-party; and the other as a covering boat in case the natives attacked. I had charge of the second boat and had four white sailors; Warby had

Sarréo and four other natives. The skipper told us to have a good look at the vessel, then try and learn what the natives on shore had to say about her, and then come off and report.

"We pulled right in to the wreck as close as we could get, for it was low tide. Then Warby and I got out and walked over to it. We found that she was stripped of everything of value, even the chain-plates having been cut out, the decks were torn up and partly burnt, and the anchors and cables were gone; in fact, she was nothing but a shell.

"'Been looted by the niggers,' I said to Warby. 'Hope the poor chaps that manned her got away in the boat; better for 'em to have been drowned than be eaten by these beggars about here.'

"'We'll soon see,' said he. 'It's my opinion they did get away safely. Look over there, Potter, at those niggers waiting for us on the beach; now if they had cut off this vessel they would have bolted into the bush, or begun firing at us. Come on.'

"We walked back to the boats and then pulled over to the village, which was about eight hundred yards away, Warby's boat, of course, going first. About thirty or forty natives came down to the water's edge and waited. They were all armed with bows, spears, and clubs, but seemed friendly.

"However, Warby jumped boldly out on to the beach, and telling his crew to keep her afloat in case he had to run for it, he went up to the crowd of niggers and shook hands with some of them; I and my chaps in the covering boat keeping our rifles out of view, but quite ready.

"In about five minutes Warby sang out to me that it was all right. The vessel, the natives told him, had parted her cables, gone ashore and bilged on the reef in the night; and the hands being too frightened to come ashore, had gone away next morning in two boats. Then he told me to wait a few minutes, as he was going to the chief's house to look at the copper and other gear that the natives had taken from the schooner, and very likely he would buy it. First of all, though, he told Sarréo to pass him out a 12 lb. case of tobacco as a present for the chief.

"He took the case from Sarréo and handed it to the chief, and then off they went—he in the middle of thirty or forty murderous-looking savages; but he had done the same thing so often before that we did not feel any particular alarm.

"We lay there, backed stern on to the beach, for about five minutes, looking at the house into which he had gone with the natives. Suddenly we saw him burst out of the house and fall on his knees, trying to draw his revolver; but in another moment he was being tomahawked and clubbed by a mob

of yelling devils! Poor chap, he must have died very quickly.

"We opened fire at once and they disappeared like magic, and then from every bush, tree, and rock they began firing at us in the boats with both muskets and arrows. One of my men was hit, and then, before I could stop him, Sarréo had jumped out of his boat and was running up the beach, rifle in hand, to where Mr. Warby's body was lying.

"He got there, I think, without being hit, just as a big native ran at him with a tomahawk. He hadn't time to put his Snider to his shoulder; but that nigger gave his last jump anyway, for I saw the rifle go off and the nigger topple over. In another five seconds he had lifted the supercargo up, thrown him over his left shoulder, and was running down to the boats.

"By this time, me and two of my crew had jumped out of the boat and ran to meet him, firing as we went. We had just reached him when down he went on to his face in the sand—a bullet had smashed his hip.

"Dropping our rifles, we picked him and Mr. Warby's body up, and by God's mercy managed to tumble into the boat together and push off, covered by the fire from the ship, which carried two six-pounders.

Sarréo lived two days — he died the same

morning that we were getting ready to take Warby's body ashore to bury on a little island between Bouka and Bougainville. So we made only one trip ashore. Poor chap! He had a good, simple heart, and almost his last words were that he 'was glad Mr. Warby wasn't eaten.'

* * * * *

"Ah, as you say, Mr. Denison, the rotten South Seas ain't no place for a white man. Good-night."

Officer and Man

THE anchor of her Majesty's ship *Hannibal* was underfoot and the captain on the bridge, and Rear-Admiral Garnet had shaken hands with the last of the "leading" Fijian white residents, who always did the welcoming and farewelling when distinguished persons visited Levuka, when Lieutenant Bollard approached him and intimated that "a person" from the shore had just come alongside in a boat and desired to see "his Excellency on private and important business."

"What the devil does the fellow want?" said the Admiral irascibly, not a whit softened by the "his Excellency" style of address; "I'm going on the bridge, and can't see any one now; we can't delay the ship and get into a mess going through the passage."

"Told him so, sir; but he says he wants to see you upon an important—a most pressing matter."

"Oh, well! Confound him! Let the sentry show him to my cabin, and tell Captain Bracely I shall be up in five minutes."

The "person," conducted by the sentry, was shown into the cabin, where the Admiral, without taking a seat or offering one to his visitor, inquired with a cold, cautious politeness born of much experience of island visitors with "important and private Service matters of great urgency," what he might be pleased to want?

The stranger was a short, fat, coarse-looking man with little pig-like eyes and scanty tufts of black beard and whiskers growing in irregular patches on his cheeks and chin, like clumps of gorse on clayey banks. He was dressed—in a manner—in an ill-fitting black cloth suit imported from Sydney. His hair was very black and shiny, plastered down over his temples and beautifully parted at the back of his bullet head. Altogether he was an unpleasantly sleek, oleaginous creature, and as he stood bowing and smirking with a cat-like grin, the Admiral felt an almost irresistible impulse to kick him out of the cabin. Notwithstanding his haste, however, he began to recollect the man as an individual who had been introduced to him a few days previously at some municipal function.

"Can't recollect the fellow's name," he muttered to himself. "I wonder what the devil the creature

wants! Got a complaint against the Consul very likely—every one has a complaint against a Consul —it's a disease in the South Seas. Confound their twopenny-halfpenny squabbles!" Then the little fat man, with another servile grin, spoke.

"I wish, your Excellency, to see you upon a matter which I think, as a loyal subject, it is my duty—my painful duty—to bring under your notice."

"Thought as much," said the Admiral to himself. "Some row about a trader insulting a native teacher, or *vice-versâ*." Then smothering an exclamation of impatience, he said—

"What is it, sir? I have no time to lose. By the way, who are you, sir?"

"My name, your Excellency, is Obadiah Howlman. I had the distinguished honour, your Excellency, of showing your Excellency over the grounds of the new Mission College. I was the contractor for the erection of that ornament to our little town." And again the oily creature smirked and bowed and did the invisible soap business.

"Surely *you* are not a missionary, sir?" asked the Admiral, with undisguised contempt.

"I am not, your Excellency. That is, I am not yet an ordained labourer in the Vineyard, your Excellency; but I hope soon to be one. Meanwhile, all the time that is left to me from my

business (I am a storekeeper and contractor) is given to the cause of spreading the Light. I was once a lost soul, your——"

"I see, I see," interrupted the Admiral, with ill-disguised disgust and open impatience, "but do, for Heaven's sake, tell me what is your complaint. I am due in Sydney on the tenth of this month, and the ship is already under way. As it is, we shall have to stop outside the reef to let you get into your boat."

"I am aware of it, your Excellency, and I should not have ventured to detain you, but this is a very serious matter — I may say, a criminal matter. When I had the honour of meeting your Excellency, on the occasion of your Excellency's visit to the College, I would have spoken of this matter then; but my poor, weak nature was so torn by conflicting emotions that I *could* not. And for the past two nights have I struggled and wrestled in spirit, and sought Divine guidance. 'Tis indeed hard for one man to reveal the sins and wickedness of a fellow-sinner—knowing that we are all but weak vessels. But yet in this case it is my bounden duty as a loyal——"

"Go on—go on, for Heaven's sake! What on earth is the matter? And what the deuce do you want?"

"Your Excellency, I wish, in all sorrow and tribulation of spirit, to give you information as to

the whereabouts of a deserter from her Majesty's Navy."

"What do you mean, sir? None of my men are missing, and if any were, I'd tell the Fijian police about it, and not delay the *Hannibal*," and with a curt nod the Admiral turned on his heel and was about to leave the cabin, when the man stepped forward and interrupted him, saying—

"One word more, your Excellency. There is in connection with this case——"

"The reward. Yes, of course. I forgot all about that. If there is a deserter from any of her Majesty's ships living ashore here, you will get the usual reward, I have no doubt. But really, sir, this is a matter that you must arrange with the police when the next man-of-war comes here, or go to the Consul"—and then, *sotto voce*—"or the devil, confound you!" and the Admiral more than ever felt inclined to kick his visitor out.

"You quite mistake me, Admiral Garnet. I have no wish to claim an earthly reward for doing my duty to my Queen and country. Since I have lived in these islands the Lord has prospered me in my worldly affairs, and I am in a position far above taking payment in money for doing my duty. I am, I trust, walking in the Light, and do not want to obtain wealth—which is but of this world—for performing such duty."

"Well, well, I am sure I beg your pardon, Mr.

Howlman. But now I really cannot talk any longer here, so please do not keep me. At the same time if there is a deserter here I don't see what business it is of yours to interest yourself in his capture. Don't you think you have enough to do to look after your store, and contracting, and your *alleged* missionary business, without running after deserters?" And inwardly the Admiral cursed his visitor for a meddlesome ass. He was in a hurry to get to sea, and yet this fellow might make it necessary for the ship to be delayed till the deserter was apprehended.

"My humble connection with missionaries, Admiral, has taught me that, at whatever cost to my own feelings, my duty as a loyal subject must, next to my duty as a Christian, be performed honestly."

"Oh, yes, yes. That's all right, I meant no disrespect to the missionaries. Many of the *gentlemen* engaged in missionary work in these islands have rendered very valuable services to her Majesty's ships on many occasions," and then to himself, "and given us a devil of a lot of trouble as well."

"Now, sir," the Admiral resumed, "having explained that the Consul or police will attend to this deserter, you will allow me to say 'Good-day.'"

"One moment more, sir," and a spiteful green

lit up the little piggish eyes. "I desire, as a British subject, to speak to you privately on this matter, and to you alone. There are reasons—very particular reasons—why her Majesty's Consul or the Fiji police here cannot deal with this case."

"Oh, well," sighed the Admiral resignedly; "sit down, Mr. Howlman. I see I am in for it, and so I'll send for my secretary and——"

"Cannot this matter be arranged without a third party?"

"No, sir; it CANNOT!"

The Admiral said this with so much emphasis, and rang the bell with so much force at the same moment, that the sentry almost jumped into the cabin to see what was the matter.

"Pass the word for Mr. Hayling to come to my cabin, and to the captain that I shall not be with him for ten minutes yet. Ten minutes will do your business, Mr. Howlman, eh?"

"Certainly, your Excellency," and an evil smile crossed the man's repulsive features.

The marine saluted, the secretary appeared, and the Admiral, nodding towards Mr. Howlman in anything but a friendly manner, growled: "My secretary, Mr. Hayling. This is Mr. Howlman, Mr. Hayling; he has a communication to make about a deserter. Now, sir, proceed."

"This," said the man, producing a photograph and laying it on the table, "is a portrait of a person

named George Barcom, who, I have every reason to believe, was a sergeant of marines on the *Flycatcher* when she was on this station five years ago."

"Take charge of that photograph, Mr. Hayling. Go ahead, Mr. Howlman."

"This man, after deserting from the *Flycatcher* at a place in this group called Yasawa, managed to make his way to the island of Niuafou, where at that time I was in temporary charge of the Christian Cultivation Association's trading station. He came to the island in an open boat from the Yasawa Group, and was not suspected until quite recently."

"Deuced long time finding him out. But proceed, sir."

"Guilty as the man was of the crime of desertion, I must yet, perforce, say that he behaved himself very well. He was kindly received by the King Tepuaka (a very earnest seeker after the Light), and all went well for the space of four years."

"Well, what happened then? Five minutes left," and the Admiral looked at his watch.

"My story will soon be told, your Excellency. The man, who calls himself George Barcom, gained the affections of Tuilagi,[1] the youngest daughter

[1] Tuilagi—"Queen of the Sky"; a name common in Polynesia.

of the King. She, although not a seeker after the truth, was yet beginning to display some interest in the teachings of Christianity, and was an exceedingly comely young woman." Here Mr. Howlman clasped his fat hands together and cast up his eyes. "But her father, at my suggestion, objected to their union. One night Barcom and the poor, misguided girl were missing. They had fled in an open boat to another island called Anuda—one of those dark places of the earth where the good seed has not yet been sown."

"And what was the nature and reason of your objection to their marriage?" said the Admiral quietly.

"I had every reason by this time to believe that the man was a deserter, and in my capacity as a preacher of the Gospel—though not ordained as such—I——"

"Confine yourself to the subject, if you please," interrupted the Admiral, with a mingled look of impatience and disgust. "You are not a missionary, you tell me, and I'm hanged if I'm going to listen to a sermon in my own cabin just now. Yet I have already given you as much of my time as if you were one. But don't trespass on my good nature too much."

"I thought it my duty to interfere and prevent such a wicked and improper marriage. And, your

Excellency, this carrying away the young woman against her father's wishes was very detrimental to the progress of the Mission work. As I have said, she was beginning to evince a certain concern for her soul——"

"Confound it, man! why will you so persistently harp upon irrevelant matters that do not, as far as I can see, possibly concern what you really want to tell me? Have you a brief to speak for the missionaries? I am acquainted with the principal *gentlemen* (again he emphasised the word) who conduct mission work in the South Seas, but I'll be hanged if I ever heard your name before—not even as a house-builder, or whatever your vocation is." And then, with a quick glance at the cunning visage of Howlman, he added, "I suppose you knew this young woman very well—perhaps were a particular friend of hers?"

Mr. Obadiah Howlman coughed. "Hm—er. Well, your Excellency, my dear wife, who has now departed to her rest—an indeed well-earned rest—when alive, took much interest in this young girl, and, before she was called away, besought me to cherish and protect her. And, as time went on, there *was* formed, I may say, an attachment between this young creature and myself—that is, of course, such an attachment as could exist between a young woman of this kind, yearning for instruction, and her spiritual adviser and guide."

"Yes, yes; I quite understand, Mr. Howlman. Mr. Hayling has notes of your statement, and the photograph. Now, if you will kindly keep your own counsel on the matter, you will hear in due course that we have arrested this man, and then, I think, you will be satisfied."

Then turning to his secretary, the Admiral said, "The *Spitfire* is due at Levuka about the 8th. Write a letter to Commander Arness, and tell him to call at Anuda and arrest a deserter from the marines, calling himself George Barcom, and who can be identified by this photograph. He is the only white man on the island, so this Mr. Howlman says, and there should be no difficulty in finding him. That will satisfy you, I presume, Mr. Howlman?"

"Quite, sir, I assure you. I have done my duty and——"

"Good-day, sir. You will just have time to get into your boat and get ashore while we are in smooth water, and before we start the engines."

The Admiral did not seem to notice the little fat man's outstretched hand. The secretary bowed him out of the cabin, holding the photograph in one hand and his notebook in the other. Neither of them liked his look well enough to shake hands with him.

The Admiral, however, did not give the order to start the engines immediately, for the sentry, in

accordance with orders received from the secretary, waited till Mr. Obadiah Howlman was at the foot of the accommodation-ladder, and then called out, "Hold on that boat a minute or two; the Admiral wants to send a letter ashore."

For twenty minutes Mr. Howlman waited impatiently in the boat, and then a big, official-looking letter was handed down the ladder to the boatman, addressed: "O.H.M.S.—Commander Arness, H.M.S. *Spitfire*, care of H.B.M. Consul, Levuka, Fiji."

Mr. Howlman smiled to himself with the satisfied air of a man who has done his duty. He knew the contents of the letter, and recognised through its envelope the hard cardboard of the photograph of George Barcom enclosed therein. There was also a smaller note, addressed to Commander Arness by name, and marked, "Private letter."

Five minutes later the *Hannibal* steamed through the passage, and shaped a course for Sydney.

* * * * *

The *Spitfire* was steaming full speed E.S.E. from Levuka. On the bridge was Commander Arness talking to the navigating lieutenant, a young and almost effeminate-looking officer.

The land had just been sighted, and lay right ahead.

'Will there be daylight enough left for us to get

there and have this wretched thing over, Carteret?" asked Commander Arness.

"Plenty, sir, if this weather keeps up and you don't want to stay there more than a couple of hours."

"No. Two hours should be ample time. This letter from Hayling explains the whole business," and he handed the lieutenant the despatch from the Admiral's secretary, which duly set forth that the *Spitfire* was to take on board a certain white trader living on Anuda—otherwise, Cherry Island—and bring him prisoner to Syndey. His wife was to be returned to her father at Niuafou. The last paragraph in the letter was to this effect—

"Be careful to identify beyond doubt this alleged deserter. The Rear-Admiral has received this information at the instant of sailing, and he is by no means certain that the statements of his informant can be depended upon. A photograph of the reputed deserter is enclosed herewith. The Admiral thinks that Mr. Carteret may know the man, as he was serving in the *Flycatcher* five years ago."

"This rascal Howlman has informed upon the poor devil for spite," said the Commander; "here's a private note from Hayling to myself about the fellow."

The lieutenant took the note and read—

"MY DEAR ARNESS,—Just a line on my own account. Be careful what you are doing in this business. The fellow who informed is a sort of hanger-on to the missionaries here. They don't think much of him, but seem to put up with the swab as a necessary evil. He confessed that jealousy had something to do with the matter, and I could see the Admiral wanted to kick him out of the cabin. Make sure that this man Barcom *is* a deserter, or there will be the devil to pay if he should prove to be an American citizen, or anything of that kind.—Yours, CHARLES HAYLING."

"You see why they have left the matter to us, Carteret. You were on the *Flycatcher* five years ago, and the Admiral thinks you may be able to identify this fellow. Of course Barcom is not his name."

Mr. Carteret at this moment was very busy with the chart, over which he bent his head a moment, and then turned sharply to the man at the wheel, who was not out of earshot.

"Keep your course," he said sharply; "why don't you attend to your steering!" Then he turned to the commander: "I beg your pardon, sir; you were saying?——"

"I was saying that you ought to remember such an incident as a sergeant of marines deserting from the *Flycatcher* when she was down here five years ago."

"I do remember it. The man's name was Charles Parker."

"Is that the man?" And Arness handed him a photograph of a man dressed in white ducks and a straw hat, evidently taken by an amateur.

Carteret looked at the photograph for fully a couple of minutes before he answered slowly—

"No, I don't think that this is the man."

A few hours later the *Spitfire* had steamed in close to the land, and a boat was lowered. In this boat were Lieutenant Carteret, a sergeant of marines, with three privates and half a dozen blue-jackets.

"I have force enough to take a boat-load of deserters," remarked the lieutenant to his commander, as he descended the poop ladder on his way to the boat.

Commander Arness laughed. "Oh, well, you know the natives might take it into their heads to resist his arrest. But be careful what you are doing: make perfectly sure that he *is* the man. You don't know what complications might arise if we carried off the wrong person."

* * * * *

The moment the boat touched the shore, she

was surrounded by a crowd of friendly, brown-skinned islanders, who seemed delighted to see the strangers.

"Any one of you fellows speak English?" asked Mr. Carteret.

"Yes, sir," and a big, burly fellow with a fine open countenance advanced to the officer. "Me speak English, and plenty more men here speak it, too. What you want, sir?"

"Any white men living here?" asked Carteret quietly.

"Oh, yes—one, a very good man; his name is Joajai" [George].

"Take me to his house," said the officer. "I want to see him."

In a few minutes Mr. Carteret and his marines were being conducted up a steep and rugged path towards the white trader's house, which was situated quite apart from the native village, while the blue-jackets were left in the boat, remarking to each other that this white man was a most cursed unfriendly sort of a chap not to come down to the beach when he saw a man-of-war's boat ashore.

"Don't you be such a fool, Tom," said the coxswain to one of the men. "You're always a-jumpin' at conclusions too rapid. Just you wait a bit and see. It's my belief that this chap has been up to something, and the marines have gone with Carteret to scruff him and bring him aboard.

I saw the sergeant had a pair of darbies, and what do you suppose that Carteret's come ashore with a regular escort for?"

A ten minutes' walk and Lieutenant Carteret and his men, guided by a number of natives, reached the white man's thatched dwelling, which stood amid a grove of banana and bread-fruit trees. When within a few yards, the lieutenant saw a tall, graceful young native girl, clad in semi-European style, advance to the open door, and then with a terrified exclamation withdraw again.

"That is Tui,[1] Joajai's wife," said one of the natives, pointing to the girl, who now again appeared, and, with her full dark eyes dilated with alarm, timidly held out her hand to the officer and murmured something in the native tongue.

"She speaks English, but she is afraid of the men with the guns," explained the native guide.

"Where is your husband?" said Lieutenant Carteret, motioning to the girl to seat herself, and the marines to stand back.

She only shook her head, and turned inquiringly to the natives who accompanied the officer.

"The white man is away on the other side of the island, sir. He be here in 'bout one half-hour," said the English-speaking native. "Suppose you like, sir, I send some one go tell him come quick?"

Carteret hesitated a moment, then answered

[1] The diminutive of Tuilagi.

"No." Then turning to the sergeant of marines, he said, "Let your men fall still further back, sergeant. This is a delicate matter, and I don't want this confounded crowd of natives, many of whom understand English, to hear what I have to say to this woman. Send a man down to the boat, and tell the coxswain that I shall have to wait for some time. If the ship makes a signal, the boat can go off and tell the captain that I shall have to wait; then she can come back for me."

All this time the trader's young wife sat trembling upon a rude couch that stretched across one side of the room; and her eyes never left the officer's face for an instant, save when for a moment she gave a terrified glance at the rifles and bayonets of the marine escort.

The moment that the marines had fallen back the lieutenant stepped forward and took the young woman by the hand.

"Tui," he said hurriedly, drawing her to the further end of the room with firm but gentle hand, and speaking so low and without motion of his lips that none but she knew that he spoke at all, "for God's sake and for mine and your husband's, do not be frightened, but listen to me and do exactly as I tell you."

Still trembling like a startled fawn, the girl raised her lustrous eyes to the young officer's face. His earnest, sincere manner and expression of

deep concern seemed to reassure her, and though her bosom heaved and her breath came in quick, short gasps, she turned her face to him in the confidence of dawning hope.

"Who are you, sir, and what do you wan' my husban' for?"

"Tell these natives to go," said the lieutenant. "Have no fear. I am your husband's friend; but, *be quick!*"

Still, with a wondering look upon her beautiful face, the girl advanced to the door, said something in the island tongue to the crowd of curious natives, and then gently closed the door.

"This is a rum go!" said the sergeant of marines to himself, as he saw the door shut to. "What the devil has the girl been doing? Are the bracelets for her, I wonder?"

"Tui," said Lieutenant Carteret, the moment they were alone, "time presses. You speak English so well as to thoroughly understand that which I am now about to tell you?"

"Yes, sir," she answered, standing before him with clasped hands, "I think so. A white woman who is dead now taught me to read and write English, and my husban' always talk English to me."

"Good. Then listen to me, my girl. I am Lieutenant Carteret, of H.M.S. *Spitfire*—that ship out there—sent here with the ship's police to arrest

a deserter from the *Flycatcher* on this station five years ago. This is the man's photograph. He is said to be your husband, and calls himself George Barcom. Now, when I was an officer of the *Flycatcher*, I knew a man named Charles Parker"—her face went a deadly pallor—"who deserted the ship at the Yasawa Group in Fiji. I can, without doubt, identify this man. But, Tui, I have looked at this photograph when it was held in the hand of my captain, and said that this is *not* the man whom I knew as Charles Parker. But look at it yourself and tell me—is this the photograph of your husband, and is this man on this island?"

With shaking fingers she took it from him, looked at it, and then raised her face to the officer.

"Is this the doin' of a man called Obadiah Howlman?"

"Yes," answered the lieutenant, "it *is* the work of Obadiah Howlman. He brought this photograph to the Admiral only a few days ago."

A savage gleam came into her eyes. "The brute! I kill him for *this* some day!"

"That will not save your husband, my girl," said Carteret; then he waited a moment and added, "whatever it might do later on."

Suddenly the girl's dark eyes filled with tears, and she laid her hand on the officer's sleeve.

"What is to be done, sir? For God's sake don' you take my husband from me, sir."

"*This* can be done. You have seen this photograph. You say that it is not that of your husband, don't you? But, Tui, I must do my duty, do you understand? I must see your husband."

"And you are the man whose life he saved—for now I 'member your name and the story he told me long ago—you who say you are his friend, you would do this thing, you who in the ship gave him money so that he might——"

"Wait, my girl, till I have finished; then you will understand. Listen now. I will remain here, and you will yourself find your husband and bring him here to this house so that I may see him. Bring him here quickly, and by some way that my men cannot see his face. And then, Tui, when I have spoken to him, then for your sake and for his sake I will lie, and swear he is not the man I have been sent to take. Then, when my ship has gone, you—you and he—you must promise me this, Tui—must leave this island as quickly as possible; so that when Obadiah Howlman sends another warship here—as he will do—they may not discover that I am a liar and have been false to my duty."

"Oh, sir, is this true? Surely you would not tell a lie to a poor native girl like me?"

"Go, my girl"—and Carteret placed a kindly hand on her shoulder—"go quickly to Parker—I know very well that he is not far off. *He* will believe what I say."

For a moment she gazed intently into his face, as if she would read his soul; and then seizing his hand pressed it to her lips, and went out by the door that opened at the rear of the house.

Then the lieutenant opened the front door and walked slowly across to where the marines were standing.

"Take your men out of sight, sergeant. I don't want this fellow frightened until I know who he is. If he's the man we want, we'll have no trouble in getting him. I've induced his wife to go and bring him."

Whistling softly in an unconcerned manner, he turned back and stood at the door of the house and waited there for perhaps ten minutes, until he saw the girl returning with a white man, who appeared to be ill and weak, for he had on a heavy top-coat, and a shawl wrapped round his neck in such a way that his features were almost entirely hidden.

* * * * *

Lieutenant Carteret allowed the man and woman to enter, and then followed, closing the door after him.

As soon as he was inside, the white man threw off his muffler and turned towards the officer.

"You must take me, sir," he said, speaking calmly. "I cannot let you do this for me. I know, sir, that you cannot help yourself."

"No, by Heavens! Parker, I cannot take you. You jumped overboard and saved my life. I tell you, man, that I *can't* do it. Do you think I can ever forget that awful thirty minutes, nearly six years ago, when you kept me afloat off the Bampton Shoal? Now, Parker, just listen. I have a plan; the whole thing is arranged as soon as we leave here. But you and your wife *must* get away from this island soon after the *Spitfire* leaves. That infernal sweep, Howlman, will be sure to send another man-of-war after you——"

"Listen to me, sir. I, too, have a plan. You shall not ruin yourself for me. You are only a very young man, sir, and have the world before you. I dread nothing but the temporary separation from Tui here. To me my arrest means only dismissal from the service and a couple of years in gaol; and likely enough, I shall get back here again without much trouble."

"No, I——"

"Don't waste time, sir. Call the escort, but for God's sake, sir, do the thing quickly; look at my girl, sir, and let me get away before I break down too, and act the coward. If you don't call the escort at once, I will."

"You madman, Parker," began Carteret, and then Tui threw her arms round her husband.

"Are you tired of me?" she sobbed. "Is this how you would leave the woman who loves

you, and who will be the mother of your child?"

The deserter caught her in his arms, and looking over his shoulder at the lieutenant, said, "For God's sake, sir, don't wait. Call in your men and get it over."

"Parker, for Heaven's sake take this chance. I tell you, man, that I have no fear for myself. I don't care a straw about the Service if this is discovered."

"Stand aside, sir. I'm not the man to let you sacrifice yourself for me——" And unloosing his wife's arms from his neck, he advanced to the door.

"Very well; it is your own fault."

The next instant the lieutenant threw open the door.

"Sergeant, bring your men here."

* * * * *

Half an hour later Lieutenant Carteret reported to Commander Arness.

"I have brought the prisoner on board, sir. He is a man named Charles Parker, and was sergeant of marines on the *Flycatcher*."

"Very good, Mr. Carteret. What have you done with his wife?"

"She refused to leave, sir, and when we brought the man away, went off to the other side of the island."

* * * * *

When the *Spitfire* reached Sydney, Charles Parker was duly tried by court-martial, and in consequence of the friendly exertions of the principal witness against him, Lieutenant Neil Carteret, was let off lightly. He was dismissed from the service, and sentenced to imprisonment in a Sydney jail for eighteen months.

When his time had expired, he managed, after a few months of waiting about in Sydney, to work his way back to Anuda Island. And scarce had the boat touched the beach when he was seized by the welcoming arms of his native friends and carried ashore.

"Is it well with my wife, O friends?" he asked.

"It is well with her," they answered; "in a little while we will take you to her, but first let us tell thee of that which has befallen her on this island."

Then they told him.

* * * * *

"One day after the warship had gone," they said, "there came here a trading schooner from Niuafou. On the ship were Tepuaka, the King of Niuafou—the father of thy wife—and many of his men. And with him there came also the little fat white man named Opataia [Obadiah]. All those men that came with Tepuaka, the King, were *lotu* [Christians]. No sooner did they land, than Tepuaka and his friend, the fat little white man, Opataia, walked to the house of his daughter, thy

wife, Tui, but all of his men he bade remain here in the village.

"'See,' said one of these men of Niuafou to us vauntingly, 'see what has come to pass! Tuilagi refused to take for her husband the good and pious man Opataia, but fled with this common white man, who is no better than a heathen. And then what comes? This bad white man is caught by his countrymen and put in a prison with chains upon his body. So now the King comes for his daughter, for even now is Opataia willing to take her, though she is but of little worth, to my mind.'

"While they spoke thus to us, Tepuaka and his white friend had gone to thy house, and there did Tui, thy wife, meet them with smiles to hide what lay in her heart.

"'Get thee ready, thou wicked woman,' said her father roughly to her; 'get thee ready quickly to leave this heathen land and return to thy own country, where thou shalt be wife to this good man, Opataia, who desires thee still.'

"'It is well, my father,' said Tui; 'but yet leave us now for a little. Surely if this man desires me for his house he can speak to me with his own mouth, and not through thine.'

"So her father went without the house, and Opataia, the white man, remained with Tui.

"Then said the evil-faced white man to Tui: 'For the wrong that thou did'st me by running

away with that evil white man do I forgive thee, for I love thee well.' And then he put his arms about her, and sought to embrace her after the manner of a lover.

"And then from beneath her gown did Tui take out a little gun that fires six bullets; and as the fat man, Opataia, pressed her to his bosom and heeded not what she did, she placed the mouth of the little gun to the side of his fat head. Then she said—

"'This do I, dog, for the husband of whom thou hast robbed me,' and then there came a flash and a cry, and the white man sprang to his feet and fell forward on his face—dead.

"Then Tui ran from the house. She fled from her father and came towards the village, and Tepuaka the King followed her with death in his face.

"'Kill her!' he called to the men of Niuafou.

"But then we men of Anuda sprang to her aid with our clubs in our hands, and she ran into our midst and called to us to save her from her father.

"So there was much talk, and then her father's wrath began to subside, for we made him many presents of food for his journey back, and he went away in peace.

"That is all. And see, Jaojai, hither comes thy wife with her son in her arms to welcome thee home."

"*The Gallant, Good Riou*"

THIS is a true story of one of Nelson's captains, he of whom Nelson wrote as "the gallant and good Riou"—high meed of praise gloriously won at Copenhagen—but Riou, eleven years before that day, performed a deed, now almost forgotten, which, for unselfish heroism, ranks among the brightest in our brilliant naval annals, and in the sea story of Australia in particular.

In September, 1789, the *Guardian*, a forty-gun ship, under the command of Riou, then a lieutenant, left England for the one-year-old penal settlement in New South Wales. The little colony was in sore need of food—almost starving, in fact—and Riou's orders were to make all haste to his destination, calling at the Cape on the way to embark live stock and other supplies. All the ship's guns had been removed to make room for the stores, which included a "plant cabin"—a

temporary compartment built on deck for the purpose of conveying to Sydney, in pots of earth, trees and plants selected by Sir Joseph Banks as likely to be useful to the young colony—making her deck "a complete garden," says a newspaper of the time. Friends of the officers stationed in New South Wales sent on board the *Guardian* great quantities of private goods, and these were stored in the gun-room, which it was thought would be a safer place than the hold, but, as the event proved, it was the most insecure.

The ship arrived at the Cape of Good Hope in November, and there filled her decks with cattle and provisions, then sailed again, her cargo being equal in value to about £70,000. On December 23rd—twelve days after leaving the Cape—what is described as "an island of ice" was seen. Riou gave orders to stand towards it in order to renew, by collecting lumps of ice, the supply of water, the stock of fresh water having run very low in consequence of the quantity consumed by the cattle.

The *Public Advertiser* of April 30, 1790, describes what now happened. As the ship approached the island, the boats were hoisted out and manned, and several lumps collected. During this time the ship lay to, and on the ice being brought on board she attempted to stand away. Very little apprehension was at this time

entertained of her safety, although the enormous bulk of the island occasioned an unfavourable current, and in some measure gave a partial direction to the wind. On a sudden, the base of the island, which projected under water considerably beyond the limits of the visible parts, "struck the bow of the ship; she instantly swung round, and her head cleared, but her stern, coming on the shoal, struck repeatedly, and the sea being very heavy, her rudder broke away, and all her works abaft were shivered. The ship in this situation became, in a degree, embayed under the terrific bulk of ice, for its height was twice that of the mainmast of a ship of the line, and the prominent head of the berg was every moment expected to break away and overwhelm the ship. At length, after every practicable exertion, she was got off the shoal, and the ice floated past her. "It was soon perceived that the *Guardian* had six feet of water in her hold, and it was increasing very fast. The hands were set to the pumps, others to find out the leaks, and they occasionally relieved each other. Thus they continued labouring unceasingly on the 24th, although on the 23rd not one of them had had the least rest. The ship was at one period so much relieved that she had only two feet of water in the hold; but at this time, when their distress wore the best aspect, the water "increased in a moment to ten feet." Then the ship was discovered

to be strained in all her works, and the sea running high, every endeavour to check the progress of a particular leak proved ineffectual. To lighten the ship, the cows, horses, sheep, and all the other live stock for the colony were, with their fodder, committed to the deep to perish.

John Williams, boatswain of the *Guardian*, wrote to his parents in London, and told them about the disaster, and although we have no doubt he was handier with the marline-spike than with his pen, some of his badly spelled letter reads well :—

"This axident happened on the 23rd of December, and on the 25th the boats left us with moast of the officers and a great part of the seamen. The master-gunner, purser, one master's mate, one midshipman, and a parson, with nine seamen, was got into the longboat and cleared the ship. The doctor and four or five men got into a cutter and was upset close to the ship, and all of them was drowned. As for the rest of the boats, I believe they must be lost and all in them perished, for wee was about six hundred leagues from any land. There was about fifty-six men missing; a number drowned jumping into the boats; the sea ran so high that the boats could scarce live. The commander had a strong resulution, for he said he would soner go down in the

ship than he wold quid her. All the officers left in the ship was the commander, the carpenter, one midshipman, and myself. After the boats left us we had two chances—either to jump or sink. We cold just get into the sailroom and got up a new forecourse and stuck itt full of oakum and rags, and put itt under the ship's bottom; this is called fothering the ship. We found some benefit by itt for pumping and bailing we gained on hur; that gave us a little hope of saving our lives. We was in this terable situation for nine weeks before we got to the Cape of Good Hope. Sometimes our upper-deck scuppers was under water outside, and the ship leying like a log on the water, and the sea breaking over her as if she was a rock. Sixteen foot of water was the common run for the nine weeks in the hold. I am not certain what we are to doo with the ship as yet. We have got moast of our cargo out; it is all dammaged but the beef and pork, which is in good order. I have lost a great dele of my cloaths, and I am thinking of drawing of about six pound, wich I think I can make shift with. If this axident had not hapned I shold not have had aney call for aney. As for my stores, there is a great part of them thrown overboard; likewise all the officers stores in the ship is gone the same way, for evry thing that came to hand was thrown ovarboard to lighten the ship. I think that we must wait till ordars comes

from England to know what we are to do with the ship."

The chronicles of the time also relate how at daylight on Christmas morning, when the water was reported as being up to the orlop deck and gaining two feet an hour, many of the people desponded and gave themselves up for lost. A part of those who had any strength left, seeing that their utmost efforts to save the ship were likely to be in vain, applied to the officers for the boats, which were promised to be in readiness for them, and the boatswain was directly ordered to put the masts, sails, and compasses in each. The cooper was also set to work to fill a few quarter-casks of water out of some of the butts on deck, and provisions and other necessaries were got up from the hold.

Many hours previous to this, Lieutenant Riou had privately declared to his officers that he saw the final loss of the ship was inevitable, and he could not help regretting the loss of so many brave fellows. "As for me," said he, "I have determined to remain in the ship, and shall endeavour to make my presence useful as long as there is any occasion for it." He was entreated, and even supplicated, to give up this fatal resolution, and try for safety in the boats. It was even hinted to him how highly criminal it was to

persevere in such a determination; but he was not to be moved by any entreaties. He was, notwithstanding, as active in providing for the safety of the boats as if he intended to take the opportunity of securing his own escape. He was throughout as calm and collected as in the happier moments of his life.

At seven o'clock the *Guardian* had settled considerably abaft, and the water was coming in at the rudder-case in great quantities. At half-past seven the water in the hold obliged the people below to come upon deck; the ship appeared to be in a sinking state, and settling bodily down; it was, therefore, almost immediately agreed to have recourse to the boats. While engaged in consultation on this melancholy business, Riou wrote a letter to the Admiralty, which he delivered to Mr. Clements, the master. It was as follows:—

"H.M.S. *Guardian*, Dec. 25, 1789.

"If any part of the officers or crew of the *Guardian* should ever survive to get home, I have only to say their conduct, after the fatal stroke against an island of ice, was admirable and wonderful in everything that relates to their duty, considered either as private men, or in His Majesty's service. As there seems to be no possibility of my remaining many hours in this world, I beg leave to recommend to the considera-

tion of the Admiralty a sister, who, if my conduct or service should be found deserving any memory, their favour might be shown to, together with a widowed mother.

"I am, &c.,

"Phil. Stephens, Esq." "E. RIOU.

With the utmost difficulty the boats were launched. After they were got afloat and had cleared the ship, with the exception of the launch they were never afterwards heard of; the launch with nine survivors was picked up by a passing vessel ten days after she left the wreck, her people reduced to the last extremity for want of food and water.

Among the survivors was the parson mentioned by the boatswain. This was the Rev. Mr. Crowther, who was on his way as a missionary to the penal settlement. The Rev. John Newton, of Olney (poet Cowper's Newton), had got Crowther the appointment, at "eight shillings per diem, of assistant chaplain of the settlement," and Newton, writing to the Rev. R. Johnson, chaplain of Sydney, tells how he heard of the loss of the *Guardian*, "and the very next morning Mr. Crowther knocked at my door himself." Then Mr. Newton writes a letter which shows that Mr. Crowther had had enough of the sea. "It is not a service for mere flesh and blood to undertake. A

man without that apostolic spirit and peculiar call which the Lord alone can give would hardly be able to maintain his ground. Mr. Crowther, though a sincere, humble, good man, seems not to have had those qualifications, and therefore he has been partly intimidated by what he met with abroad, and partly influenced by nearer personal considerations at home, to stay with us and sleep in a whole skin." But after his experience it was not to be wondered at that he preferred to stay at home and sleep in a whole skin.

Meanwhile Riou, in spite of a ship without a rudder, and with the water in her up to the orlop deck, succeeded, as the boatswain's letter shows, after a voyage of nine weeks, in bringing his command to the Cape. A letter from Capetown, written on March 1, 1790, tells us she arrived there "eight days ago in a situation not to be credited without ocular proofs. She had, I think, nine feet of water in her when she anchored. The lower gun-deck served as a second bottom; it was stowed with a very great weight equally fore and aft. To this, and to the uncommon strength of it, Captain Riou ascribes his safety. Seeing an English ship with a signal of distress, four of us went on board, scarcely hoping but with busy fancy still pointing her out to be the *Guardian*, and, to our inexpressible joy, we found it was her. We stood in silent admiration of her heroic commander (whose

supposed fate had drawn tears from us before), shining through the rags of the meanest sailor. The fortitude of this man is a glorious example for British officers to emulate. Since that time we have gone on board again to see him. He is affable in his manners, and of most commanding presence. . . . Perhaps we, under the influence of that attraction which great sufferings always produce, may, in the enthusiasm of our commendation, be too lavish in his praise; were it not for this fear I would at once pronounce him the most God-like mortal I ever viewed. They were two months from the time the accident happened until they reached this place. Every man shared alike in the labour; and not having at all attended to their persons during the whole of that dismal period they looked like men of another world—long beards, dirt, and rags covered them. Mr. Riou got one of his hands crushed and one of his legs hurt, but all are getting well. None of his people died during their fatigues. He says his principal attention was to keep up their spirits and to watch over their health. He never allowed himself to hope until the day before he got in here, when he made the land. Destitute of that support, how superior must his fortitude be! He has this morning, for the first time, come on shore, having been employed getting stores, &c., out to lighten the ship. He wavers what to do with her—whether to put

Government to the expense of repairing her here (which would almost equal her first cost, perhaps exceed it) or burn her. Most likely the last will be resolved on."

The ship was in such a state that she was condemned by the experts at the Cape, but Riou, bearing in mind the distressed state of the colony of New South Wales, did not rest until he had sent on in other vessels all the stores he could collect.

Neither did he forget the behaviour of certain convicts. In a letter to the Admiralty he wrote: "Permit me, sir, to address you on a subject which I hope their Lordships will not consider to be unworthy their notice. It is to recommend as much as is in my power to their Lordships' favour and interest the case of the twenty convicts which my duty compelled me to send to Port Jackson. But the recollection of past sufferings reminds me of that time when I found it necessary to make use of every possible method to encourage the minds of the people under my command, and at such time, considering how great the difference might be between a free man struggling for life and him who perhaps might consider death as not much superior to a life of ignominy and disgrace I publicly declared that not one of them, so far as depended on myself, should ever be convicts. And I may with undeniable truth say that, had it not been for their assistance and support, the

Guardian would never have arrived to where she is. Their conduct prior to the melancholy accident that happened on December 23rd last was always such as may be commended, and from their first entrance into the ship at Spithead they ever assisted and did their duty in like manner as the crew. I have taken the liberty to recommend them to the notice of Governor Phillip; but I humbly hope, sir, their Lordships will consider the service done by these men as meriting their Lordships' favour and protection, and I make no doubt that should I have been so fortunate as to represent this in proper colours, that they will experience the benefit of their Lordships' interest."

The prisoners were pardoned, and the Secretary of the Admiralty wrote to Riou—

"I have their Lordships' commands to acquaint you that their concern on the receipt of the melancholy contents of the first-mentioned letter could only be exceeded by the satisfaction they received from the account of your miraculous escape, which they attribute to your skilful and judicious exertions under the favour of Divine Providence. . . . Their Lordships have communicated to Mr. Secretary Grenville, for his Majesty's information, your recommendation of the surviving convicts whose conduct, as it has so deservedly met with your approbation, will, there is every reason to hope, entitle them to his Majesty's clemency."

[This story of the gallant behaviour of these twenty prisoners does not stand alone in the convict annals of Australia. There were many other instances in which convicts behaved with the greatest heroism. Many of the earlier explorers, such as Sturt, received most valuable aid from prisoners who were members of their expeditions; and in the first days of the colony both Phillip and Hunter were quick to recognise and personally reward or recommend for pardon to the Home Government convicts who had distinguished themselves by acts of bravery.]

When Riou returned to England he was promoted to post-captain's rank, and at Copenhagen, in 1801, he commanded the *Amazon*. Perhaps we may be forgiven for reprinting from Southey's "Nelson" an account of what he did there. "The signal" (that famous one which Nelson looked at with his blind eye), "the signal, however, saved Riou's little squadron, but did not save its heroic leader. The squadron, which was nearest the commander-in-chief, obeyed and hauled off. It had suffered severely in its most unequal contest. For a long time the *Amazon* had been firing enveloped in smoke, when Riou desired his men to stand fast, and let the smoke clear off, that they might see what they were about. A fatal order, for the Danes then got clear sight of her from the batteries, and pointed their guns with such tre-

mendous effect that nothing but the signal for retreat saved this frigate from destruction. 'What will Nelson think of us!' was Riou's mournful exclamation when he unwillingly drew off. He had been wounded in the head by a splinter, and was sitting on a gun, encouraging his men, when, just as the *Amazon* showed her stern to the Trekroner Battery, his clerk was killed by his side, and another shot swept away several marines who were hauling in the main-brace. 'Come, then, my boys!' cried Riou, 'let us die all together!' The words had scarcely been uttered before a raking shot cut him in two. Except it had been Nelson himself, the British Navy could not have suffered a severer loss."

The South Seaman:

AN INCIDENT IN THE SEA STORY OF AUSTRALIA

ON the 22nd of July, 1828, the Sydney South Seaman, *Indefatigable*, eleven days out from the Port of Conception in Chili, was in lat. 17° S. and about 127° E. long., six hundred miles distant from the nearest land—the then almost unknown Paumotu Group, which Cook had well named the Dangerous Archipelago.

Five years before, the brig was named the *Calder*, and was then commanded by Captain Peter Dillon, a famous officer in the East India Company's service; his name is interwoven with the sea story of Australia as the commander of the Company's ship *Research*, and the discoverer of the relics of the gallant and ill-fated La Perouse, whose ships were wrecked on Vanikoro Island, in the New Hebrides group, in 1788.

When the *Calder* was under the command of Captain Dillon she was a crack Indian trader to

Port Jackson, but newer and smarter vessels drove her out of the trade; and in 1828 she was owned by Mr. John Duncan, an English merchant of Valparaiso, who for this present voyage had loaded her with wheat for Sydney, and sent her to sea under the command of Mr. Joseph Hunter, after changing her name to *Indefatigable.*

The first and second mates of the brig were Europeans, as also were two or three of the crew—the rest were Chilenos, picked up at the last moment of sailing. The steward was a Bengali, a man devoted to his captain, with whom he had long sailed in other seas. The Chilenos were not alone lazy and incompetent seamen, not fit to keep a look-out, nor take the wheel in rough weather, but what was worse, they were treacherous scoundrels, as ready for murder with their long, ugly sheath-knives, as British merchant sailors are with their fists for honest fighting.

Naturally enough, with such men as these the mates frequently quarrelled, and on one or two occasions the officers were driven to resort to blows to maintain proper discipline. And a Chileno, or any other Spanish South American, never forgives a blow, though a knife-thrust or a pistol-shot in the dark would not be considered anything else than proper to vindicate wounded honour. But the mates of the *Indefatigable* were simple-minded, rough British seamen. They wanted the Chilenos

to work the ship like sailormen should work a ship—the Chilenos hated work of any kind, and especially hated the steady discipline of this English merchant ship — the officers of which, when necessity demanded it, would rout out the watch below and send them aloft to shorten sail. And so, in less than a week from the day the brig sailed from Conception, mutiny and murder was plotted in the foc's'cle by the Chilenos. But none of the Englishmen on board had any thought of danger.

* * * * *

Mr. Loftgreen, the chief mate, had the middle watch. It was a marvellously clear and starlight night, with just enough wind astern to keep the brig's light canvas full and give her steerage way. As the officer slowly paced the short poop, he with difficulty resisted the soothing lullaby of the murmur of the water as it rippled past the ship's side.

On the foc's'cle, one of the Chileno sailors, named Antonio Mancillo, kept the watch, and just as Loftgreen, overcome by the stillness of his surroundings, had stopped his walk and was leaning on the rail at the break of the poop, almost dozing —good seaman as he was—he heard the Chileno cry out sharply—

"There is an island close ahead!—Come for'ard, Senor Loftgreen."

The mate ran hastily for'ard, but as he reached the short ladder which led to the topgallant foc's'cle, two Chilenos, each carrying a cutlass, sprang upon and seized him by the arms, while Mancillo held the point of a knife to his throat.

"Ha, you Ingleese dog! If you speak, you die now; we shall kill you," said one of the mutineers in a fierce whisper.

Loftgreen, a tough, wiry young fellow, struggled desperately, and freeing his right arm struck one of the Chilenos a blow that sent him down as if he had been shot, and cried out loudly, "Murder!" "Mutiny!", Mancillo meanwhile making savage thrusts at him with his knife, and the other man trying to run him through with his cutlass; but the mate, unarmed as he was, was able to cope with them both, for tripping up Mancillo he struck him on the chest so violently that he fell against the man with the cutlass.

Then the mate took to his heels and ran aft, calling loudly for assistance. The disturbance, so far, had scarcely lasted two minutes, and those of the ship's company who were not on deck knew nothing of what had happened.

Loftgreen, notwithstanding that he was wounded and bleeding in the right arm, and half-dazed from a somewhat severe cut on the head, succeeded in reaching his cabin, where he seized a pair of pistols, and still crying loudly to his sleeping fellow-

officers, prepared to defend himself to the last. Unfortunately his pistols were not loaded, and in his hurry and confusion he could not find his bullet bag.

Just then the Bengali steward, awakened by the noise, came running up the companion way, and was met by one of the mutineers—the helmsman—who struck him to the deck by a blow on the shoulder from a cutlass.

Captain Hunter, awakened from his slumber by the stamping of feet and the outcry, guessed what had happened. Quickly seizing his pistols, and buckling on his sword (in those days merchant captains always possessed swords, for they had use for them sometimes) he ran out of his cabin, just as the mutineers reached the door. He discharged both pistols together, but unfortunately was too excited to take aim, and neither shot had any effect, but for a little while he kept the Chilians at bay with his sword, until covered with wounds he staggered; in an instant one of them darted in upon him, and a cutlass was thrust through his heart.

Then the mutineers again turned their attention to the gallant mate, who was unable to get out of his cabin, one of the attacking party having turned the key from the outside. The cabin lamp had been knocked over in the struggle, and the darkness made the murderers careful of their movements, for they were afraid that Loftgreen might force his

door and burst out upon them, and after a hurried discussion they ran on deck.

Meanwhile Mr. Todd, the second mate, aroused by the cries and shots in the main cabin, jumped out of his bunk, and trying to open his cabin door, found it was fastened from the outside. Throwing himself against it, he burst it open at the same moment as the wounded steward crawled past upon his hands and knees. Unable to speak, the Bengali placed a cutlass in the officer's hands, and pointed to the hacked and bleeding body of the dead captain, just discernible in the darkness. Todd at once secured Hunter's pistols, and Loftgreen at the same moment burst the door of his cabin and came out, and the two men, who had no time for words, prepared to sell their lives dearly, believing that those of the crew who might have been loyal had been slaughtered. For some minutes they stood waiting in the darkness, and heard no sound but the moans of the steward, who was fast weakening from loss of blood.

Then came a sudden rush down the companion-way, and the Chilenos, with savage cries, were upon them! Poor Loftgreen's pistols were in bad order, and missed fire, and although the two men fought desperately with their empty weapons they were soon overpowered, and with the steward were taken on deck and lashed to the poop stanchions. Exhausted and bleeding profusely, they presently

saw some of the mutineers emerge from the cabin, dragging with them Captain Hunter's body, which they at once threw overboard.

Before these events had taken place the Chilians had quietly secured the fore-scuttle, battening down the carpenter, cook, and three other European seamen, so that even before Loftgreen was attacked the ship was practically in the hands of the six mutineers, for the man at the wheel was one of their number.

Leaving the two officers and the steward guarded by two men, the remaining four mutineers, after heaving-to the brig, went below to the bloodstained cabin, and breaking open the spirit-locker began a carousal which lasted some hours, to the accompaniment of music on Mancillo's guitar. They took care, however, to relieve the two sentinels, and kept themselves sober enough to shorten sail if it became necessary.

At daylight, after giving all their prisoners food, the mutineers held a consultation as to their future proceedings, and at noon, in pursuance of their design, they hoisted out the longboat, and placed in her a couple of breakers of water, a bag of biscuit, and a few pieces of salt meat.

Then Loftgreen and the second mate were liberated, and the former taken below. Seated at the cabin table were Mancillo and three of his fellow-ruffians.

As soon as the chief officer entered Mancillo rose, and drawing a loaded pistol from his belt he pointed to a large sheet of paper lying on the table, and ordered Loftgreen to make a rough chart showing the course and distance to the nearest land, adding, "You see that we have now got this brig. You are the only man on board who can navigate her. You must stay with us, for we want you to sail the ship to Manila. The other men we shall put in the longboat, and this chart you will draw will be good enough for them to reach the nearest land."

"The nearest land! Good God! it is inhabited by ferocious cannibals who will eat them! You cannot be so inhuman!" said the mate.

Mancillo laughed cruelly—"Let them be eaten! so much the better for us. When they are dead they cannot talk."

"Then let me share their fate, I——"

The leader of the mutineers placed the muzzle of his pistol against Loftgreen's chest.

"Be silent, you damned Ingleese dog! Be silent, and do what I tell you, or by the Holy Virgin, I kill you."

Thereupon the mate, notwithstanding his wounded arm, and with his thoughts distracted by the fate before him, not only made a good chart, but he did more; for it suddenly flashed upon him that in all probability neither Mancillo nor

any of his fellow-ruffians could read English, so after finishing the drawing he turned to Mancillo and said—

"Mr. Todd is an ignorant man, and this chart will be of no use to him unless I can give him directions how to steer. Will you let me do so?"

"No!" answered the mutineer, quickly, "you must not speak to him again, nor to any of the others."

"As you will. Poor fellows; I can do no more, but at least I can write on the back of the chart and tell Mr. Todd the prevailing directions of the winds, the courses to be steered, and the name of the least savage of the islands he can make for."

Then coolly turning the chart over, he scribbled a few lines upon it.

"There," he said, "read that; you will see that that can do no harm."

Mancillo looked critically at the writing for a few minutes, and Loftgreen's heart thumped against his ribs as he watched. Then a sigh of relief burst from him as the mutineer spoke.

"We are not murderers, and do not mind for you to give the second mate the good directions. But if you are lying to us we shall have your life for it."

These were the words he had written: "Not allowed to speak or write. Coast the islands, all are dangerous till you reach Otaheite. Am forced

to navigate the mutineers to Manila. I will try to retake the ship, as I think I can gain over Jose and the cook, and then make for Otaheite. Have patience, and trust in God always."

Loftgreen was then again placed in irons, and one of the mutineers stood sentry in the cabin over him, while Mancillo and the rest went on deck and set about disposing of the remaining prisoners. Mr. Todd was the first man ordered into the boat, which had now been lowered and brought alongside. Then Mancillo handed him the chart and a compass.

"Here," said the mutineer, "we give you fine chart, just made for you by the mate. You see he has write out for you your course, so you will soon make the land." Then he added with a grin—"Is not Antonio Mancillo damn good fellow, eh?"

Poor Todd looked at the chart, and then at the writing at the back of it, and miserably anxious and dejected as he was, he found it hard to resist smiling at the clever way in which his fellow-officer had got to windward of the Chileno. However, he pulled a long face, and said there was "mighty little chance of reaching anywhere but a savage island, with such a poor chart as that. "What," he added angrily, "is the good of this writing? We could find a cannibal island without this," and he contemptuously flung the chart into the stern sheets of the boat.

Then, one by one, the wounded steward, the carpenter, and a Swedish seaman whose name is not recorded, were brought on deck and forced, at the point of cutlasses, to enter the boat, which was then cast adrift.

As the boat dropped astern, Mancillo ran up a flag of some description, and the remaining mutineers gathered on the poop and jeered at Todd and his companions; their insulting cries and mocking words reaching the ears of the half-maddened Loftgreen in the cabin, and reminding him that he was alone and at the mercy of utter scoundrels, with any one of whom his life was not worth a moment's purchase.

But although they were not manacled, the second mate and his companions in the boat were in little better plight, for their distance from the nearest land they could hope to make was nearly six hundred miles. But Todd was no faint-heart.

"Better the open sea, my lads," he said, "than the brig and those damned Spanish cut-throats. We are at least free men. Poor Mr. Loftgreen, I fear, will be murdered."

Then after dressing the steward's wound—a cutlass slash which had severed the collar-bone—he ordered the sail to be hoisted and took the tiller. This done he steered a due west course, which according to the mate's chart would bring them to the easternmost of the Paumotus — a

group of low-lying islands almost unknown in those days except to American whale-ships.

In the boat were sufficient biscuits, salt beef, and water to last them, with great economy, for a fortnight. The boat itself was a good one, and they were provided with a compass and a course to be steered. The men were on good terms with each other and loyal and submissive to their officer; so they had much to be thankful for, and their chief sorrow in leaving the brig was their fears for the safety of Loftgreen, who had always been a kind and considerate officer.

For fifteen days the boat sailed before light breezes, till on August 7th they made Tawere Island in the Paumotus Archipelago (named by Cook "Resolution Island" after his ship) almost in the centre of the vast group, having passed without sighting them many other low-lying atolls which lay in their course on the starboard hand. To their joy the brown-skinned natives of Tawere behaved very kindly to them, for several whaleships, and, later on, the missionaries of the London Missionary Society's ship, had visited their island, and the people were well-disposed to white men. The island afforded but little in the way of food—only fish, pigs, cocoanuts, and a coarse species of taro, but of these the people were profuse in their presents to the white men.

Only remaining a day and a night at Tawere, Todd bade farewell to the amiable natives, and continued on his course, sighting many other islands of the group, but calling at none. Then came a heavy gale from the south, and he had to let the boat run right before it to the north. The sea was short and lumpy, and only continuous bailing kept her from filling.

Early on the morning of the 15th further misfortunes overtook them; a sudden squall sprung the mast, although the sail was close reefed. Then the rudder gudgeons carried away, and the boat broached to and shipped a heavy sea, which with other damage tore the compass from the afterthwart, where it had been placed, and completely smashed and rendered it useless. A few hours later, however, the weather cleared, the gale died away, and the gentle south-east trade again breathed upon them. That evening they made Anaa (Chain Island), the natives of which, owing to previous association with South Seamen—as whaling and trading ships were then called—were very good to them. At Anaa, Todd and his comrades remained for two days, and on the morning of the 20th day they sighted the noble outlines of Tahiti, the Garden of the South Pacific.

Here they thought their troubles were ended, for the natives of Tahiti were known to not only be friendly to white men, but Christianised as well.

But as soon as the sea-worn men approached the beach, numbers of canoes, filled with natives armed with muskets, put off, and surrounding the boat, made the white men prisoners.

Greatly alarmed at this proceeding—which was such a contrary reception to what they had expected from the Tahitians—Todd at first imagined he had lost his reckoning and arrived at some strange island. But some of the natives spoke a little English, and very soon their conduct was explained to the white men.

Some months previously a party of escaped convicts had arrived at the island in a small schooner, which they had seized at Van Dieman's Land (Tasmania). In bringing the vessel to an anchor the convicts lost her on the reef, and their lives had been saved by the Tahitians. The strangers were hospitably received, but their degraded natures were soon made evident. They broke into a chief's house, stole food, arms, and ammunition, placed them in a boat belonging to the local white missionaries, and ran away with her. A party of Tahitians gave chase, and were fired upon by the convicts, who killed four of their number and badly injured their canoe, so that the remainder had the greatest difficulty in reaching the land again.

Todd and his companions were thought to be another party of convicts, and the queen and

chiefs of the island gave orders that they should be kept close prisoners.

But this additional misfortune was soon over, for as the boat, escorted by the canoes, entered Papeite Harbour Mr. Todd saw lying at anchor the London South Seaman *Tiger*, Captain Richards. This vessel had been at Conception at the same time as the *Indefatigable*, and the officers of each ship had met. In the course of an hour or so Todd saw Captain Richards and told his story, and then the misunderstanding with the Tahitians was cleared up and the second mate and his companions supplied with every comfort. A week later the *Tiger* sailed for Sydney, taking the four men with her.

Meanwhile what had become of the *Indefatigable*, and how fared poor Loftgreen with the mutineers?

* * * * *

As soon as the longboat was clear of the brig the mutineers released the mate.

"We now want the brig navigated to Guam" (one of the Ladrone Islands), said Mancillo to Loftgreen; "I am captain now, and you must do as I bid you. Beware of a mistake. If you take the ship out of her course we will serve you as we served Captain Hunter."

So the voyage, which lasted until the 12th of December, began. The life led by the men in the longboat was easy enough compared with the

terrible months of mental torture endured by the unfortunate mate. Only that fine weather prevailed the whole time, the brig would most assuredly have been lost, for the mutineers were utterly without discipline, and would only furl, or set, or trim the sails just as the humour took them. Every night Loftgreen was put in irons and left to himself till daylight.

There was a considerable supply of wine and spirits on board, and four out of the six Chilians were continuously drunk. Then these four vowed that it was essential to the success of their enterprise that Loftgreen should be murdered. The two men who did not drink were more prudent ruffians, and knew that without their navigator they were helpless, and so they protected him.

Very often Loftgreen, who had a fair knowledge of Spanish, had to stand in the midst of the Chilenos whilst he was taking observations, and listen to them debating as to whether they should take his life at once or spare him until they reached Guam. And it was only the heroic resolve to save the ship for his owners that prevented him from trying to escape in a small quarter-boat, or attempting to kill the mutineers in their sleep, and let the brig drift about the Pacific till he was sighted by another ship.

He soon found out that the mutineers had no idea

that Guam was actually settled by the Spaniards. It is probable that they knew that Guam was owned by Spain, but no doubt thought that the island was inhabited only by natives, like Saipan and Rota in the same group. One of the two mutineers, who entertained friendly feelings towards him, told him that Mancillo's idea was to sell the brig to the islanders in return for liberty to lead his ideal of life—eating, drinking, sleeping, and keeping an extensive harem on one of the many islands in the North Pacific.

At last the brig arrived at Port San Luis d'Apra, in Guam, and a native pilot brought her to an anchor. One of the mutineers remarked to Mancillo that he supposed they were safe, "But," said he, pointing to some houses ashore, "those are not native houses; there are Europeans living here."

A boat was lowered, and Mancillo, after dressing himself in Captain Hunter's best clothes, was rowed ashore by two of his fellow-mutineers to see what the place was like. To their intense surprise they found awaiting them the Alcalde of San Luis, and a lieutenant and guard of Spanish soldiers.

The Alcalde questioned them closely as to who they were, and what had brought them to Guam. Their replies did not satisfy the official, who, placing Mancillo in custody and taking half a

dozen soldiers with him, made the two Chilenos row him off to the ship.

On seeing the soldiers approach, the remaining mutineers, cowards as they were, concluded that their shipmates had betrayed them, and ran below to hide themselves, leaving Mr. Loftgreen on deck to receive the Alcalde, who was soon in possession of the whole story. Unlike most Spanish officials, he did not want a bribe to ensure his performance of his duty. He promptly seized the *Indefatigable*, and the Chilenos were taken ashore and marched to the fort under guard. Then the Alcalde and Governor, with much formality, held a court, and took the mate's evidence; the result of which was the mutineers were placed in heavy irons, and the almost heart-broken Loftgreen was received in the Governor's house as an honoured guest and supplied with every comfort.

Soon afterwards the *Rainbow*, a British frigate commanded by Captain Rous, put into San Luis d'Apra. The *Rainbow* had made many important discoveries in Australian waters, more particularly on the northern coast, but the name of her gallant commander will probably be longer remembered as Admiral Rous, the famous turf patron, than as Captain Rous the explorer and navigator.

Mr. Loftgreen was received on board the *Rainbow* as English naval officers always receive a brave and distressed merchant seaman. The mutineers were

handed over to the British captain for conveyance to Manila for trial. The frigate arrived at Manila on January 19th, and there the Chilenos had short shrift, for within three days they were brought to trial and duly garrotted.

Mr. Loftgreen, who made many friends in Manila, was afforded a passage to Sydney, and the *Indefatigable* was condemned as a prize to the Spanish Government. She was afterwards lost in a typhoon in the China Sea.

Such is one of the many incidents of the sea story of Australia.

Foster's Letter of Marque

A TALE OF OLD SYDNEY

I

ONE by one the riding-lights of the few store-ships and whalers lying in Sydney Harbour on an evening in January, 1802, were lit, and as the clear notes of a bugle from the barracks pealed over the bay, followed by the hoarse calls and shrill whistles of the boatswains' mates on a frigate that lay in Sydney Cove, the mate of the *Policy* whaler jumped up from the skylight where he had been lying smoking, and began to pace the deck.

The *Policy* was anchored between the Cove and Pinchgut, ready for sea. The north-easter, which for three days had blown strongly, had now died away, and the placid waters of the harbour shimmered under the starlight of an almost cloudless sky. As the old mate tramped to and fro on the deserted poop, his keen seaman's eye caught sight

of some faint grey clouds rising low down in the westward—signs of a south-easterly coming before the morning.

Stepping to the break of the poop, the officer hailed the look-out forward, and asked if he could see the captain's boat coming.

"No, sir," the man replied. "I did see a boat a while ago, and thought it was ours, but it turned out to be one from that Batavian Dutchman anchored below Pinchgut. Her captain always goes ashore about this time."

Swinging round on his heel with an angry exclamation, the mate resumed his walk, muttering and growling to himself as elderly mates do mutter and growl when a captain promises to be on board at five in the afternoon and is not in evidence at half-past seven. Perhaps, too, the knowledge of the particular cause of the captain's delay somewhat added to his chief officer's ill-temper—that cause being a pretty girl; for the mate was a crusty old bachelor, and had but little sympathy with such "tomfoolery."

"Why the devil couldn't he say goodbye to her and be done with it and come aboard," he grumbled, "instead of wasting half a day over it?"

But Mr. Stevenson did not consider that in those days pretty women were not plentiful in Sydney, and virtue was even scarcer than good looks, and

Dorothy Gilbert, only daughter of the Deputy Acting Assistant Commissary-General of the penal settlement, possessed all the qualifications of a lovable woman, and therefore it was not wonderful that Captain Charles Foster had fallen very much in love with her.

Dorothy, of course, had her faults, and her chief one was the rather too great store she set upon being the daughter of an official. Pretty nearly every one in those days of the settlement was either an official or a prisoner or an ex-convict, and the D.A.A.C.G. was of no small importance among the other officials in Sydney. The girl's acquaintance with the young master of the *Policy* began in a very ordinary manner. His ship had been chartered by the Government to take out a cargo of stores to the settlement, and the owners, who were personally acquainted with her father, had given Foster a letter of introduction. This he had used somewhat sooner than he had at first intended, for on presenting himself at the Commissary's office he had caught sight of Dolly's charming face as she stood talking to a young man in the uniform of a sergeant of the New South Wales Regiment who had brought a letter to her father.

"Thank you, Sergeant," the young lady said with a gracious smile. "Will you present my father's compliments to the Major and say we

shall be sure to come. He is not here at present, but cannot delay long, as he will have much business to transact with the master of the ship just come in, and who will doubtless be here very soon."

Just at that moment Foster appeared at the open door, and the young lady, divining at once that he was the person of whom she had just spoken, bowed very prettily, and begging him to be seated whilst she had search made for her father, left the office and disappeared in the living portion of the house, followed by a look of very great interest from Captain Foster. A minute later the Commissary entered the room, and Foster was soon deep in business with Dolly's father, to whom he made himself very agreeable—having a certain object in view.

Their business concluded, the young man rose to go, and not till then—being wise in his generation—did he allude to the fact of his having a private letter of introduction from his owners—Messrs. Hurry Brothers, of London—to Mr. Scarsbrook. The stiff, official manner of the D.A.A.C.G. at once thawed, and being at heart a genial old fellow, he expressed his pleasure, shook hands again with the young man, and inquired why he had not presented the letter or made allusion to it before.

Foster, who had pretty well gauged Mr. Scars-

brook mentally, modestly replied that he did not care to obtrude private affairs at an inopportune time. He knew that weighty affairs doubtless occupied Mr. Scarsbrook's mind during his business hours, but had intended to do himself the honour of presenting his letter later on, &c.

This at once impressed the D.A.A.C.G., who asked him to dinner that evening.

"A most intelligent young man, my dear," he told Dolly shortly after. "His attention to business before all else has given me a very favourable impression of him."

Dolly tossed her head. "I hope I shall not be disappointed in him. Is he young?" she asked indifferently.

"Quite; and in manners and appearance much above his position."

Dolly did like him very much—much more than she cared to confess to herself—and their first meeting at dinner led to many of a less formal character, and ere a week had passed Captain Charles Foster was very much in love with his host's daughter, and not being a man who wasted time, was only awaiting an opportunity to tell her so.

Now Dolly, who had first flirted with and then flouted every one of the bachelor officials in Sydney, military or civilian, who visited the Commissary's abode, was, to do her justice, a girl of sense at

heart, and she felt that Captain Foster meant to ask her an all-important question—to every woman —and that her answer would be "Yes." For not only was he young, handsome, and highly thought of by his owners, but he came of a good family, and had such prospects for his future as seldom came in the way of men in the merchant service even in those days of lucky South-Seamen and East India traders, who made fortunes rapidly. And then 'twas evident he was very much in love with her, and this latter fact considerably and naturally influenced her.

The first week passed pleasantly enough, then, to his anger and disgust, Foster found he had a rival; and before the end of the second week he realised, or imagined so, that he was beaten in the field of love—by a Dutchman!

Sergeant Harry Burt was the first to give him warning, for he was often on duty at or near the Commissary's quarters, and, indeed, had often taken notes from Foster to the fair Dolly. He showed a warm interest in the matter, for Foster was always polite to the sergeant, and did not turn up his nose at "soldier men," as other masters of ships were but too ready to do.

It had so happened that the work of discharging his ship had kept Foster very busy during the second week of his stay, and he had paid but one evening visit to Dolly and her father, and was

hurrying the cargo ashore with feverish eagerness. Once that was accomplished, he meant to devote himself (1) to proposing to the young lady, (2) gaining her father's consent, and (3) getting to sea again as soon as possible, making a good cruise at the whale fishery, and returning to Sydney within two years as master and owner of a ship of his own. Consequently, Burt's news gave him considerable disquietude.

"Who did you say he was, Sergeant?" he asked gloomily; "a Dutchman?"

"Yes, sir; he's the master of that Dutch Batavian ship that has brought stores from Batavia. Mr. Scarsbrook seems to make a lot of him of late, and he's always coming up to the Commissary's place. And if he sees Miss Scarsbrook out in the garden he swaggers in after her as if he were an admiral of the fleet. Portveldt's his name, and—and——"

"And what, Sergeant?"

"Well, I think Miss Scarsbrook rather likes him, that's all. You see, sir, you haven't been there for a week, and this young Dutchman is by no means bad-looking, and even our Major says he's a jolly fine fellow—and all that goes a long way with women, you know. Then you only visit the house once in a week; the Dutchman goes there every day, and every time he comes he brings his boatswain with him—a big, greasy-faced

chap. Last night he followed his master, carrying a cheese—a present for the Commissary, I suppose."

"Well, I shall soon see how the land lies, Sergeant. I'm going ashore presently, and I can promise you it won't be my fault if I let this fellow get to windward of me."

But Miss Dolly was not to be seen that day, nor yet on the following one. She was vexed at Foster having thought of his work before herself, and she had determined to punish him by not meeting him for some little time, and amuse herself with the handsome young Dutch sailor meanwhile. So, in no very amiable mood, Foster went back to his ship, finished discharging, and delighted his old mate by telling him to get ready for sea as quickly as possible. And on this particular evening when our story opens the *Policy* only waited for her captain—who had gone ashore—so he told Stevenson—to say goodbye to the Commissary, with parting instructions to the mate to begin to heave up as soon as he saw his (Foster's) boat leave the Cove.

After spending half an hour with the Commissary, Foster asked to see Miss Dorothy, and was soon ushered into the sitting-room, where the young lady welcomed him effusively, and her manner soon drove all suspicious thoughts of his rival out of his mind. Her mother, a placid lady,

who was absolutely ruled by Dolly and her father, smiled approval when Foster asked her daughter to accompany him to the garden and take a look at the harbour. She liked him, and had previously given him much assistance by getting out of the way whenever she suspected he wanted to see Dolly alone.

As soon as they had gained the screen of the shaded path leading to the water's edge, Foster came to the point at once.

"Dolly," he said, "you know why I have asked you to come with me here. My ship is ready for sea, and it may be quite two years before I shall have the happiness of seeing you again."

"'Tis very kind of you to pay me so pretty a compliment, Captain Foster—or I should say *Mr.* Foster," said Dolly, concealing a smile; "but surely you need not have brought me out to the garden to tell me this."

Her pretended forgetfulness of some past passages in their brief acquaintance, as her speech implied, ruffled him.

"You are very particular with your *Mr.* Foster, Miss Dolly; and why not 'Captain'?"

Dolly raised her eyebrows in surprise.

"Captains hold the King's commission and fight for their country," she said demurely. "The master of a horrid ship that goes catching whales has no

right to the title." Then she laughed and shook her long, fair curls.

"Upon my word, young lady, you are very complimentary; but, Dolly, no more of this banter. My boat is waiting, and I have but a few minutes to ask you to give me your answer. In all seriousness remember that my future depends upon it. Will you marry me? Will you try to love me? May I go away with the hope that you will look forward to my return, and——"

"In all seriousness, Mr. Foster, I will not."

"Why, what have I done to offend you? I thought you—I thought that I——" and then, getting somewhat confused and angry at the same time at Dolly's nonchalant manner, he wound up with, "I believe that damned Dutchman has come between us!"

"How dare you swear at me, sir? I suppose, though, it is the custom for captains in the merchant service to swear at ladies. And what right have you to assume that I should marry you? Because I rather liked to talk to you when I felt dull, is that any reason why you should be so very rude to me? And once for all, sir, I shall never marry a mere merchant sailor—a common whaling master. I shall marry, when I do marry, an officer and a gentleman in the King's service."

"Ah!" Foster snapped, "and what about the Dutchman?"

Now up to this point Dolly had been making mere pretence. She honestly loved the young seaman, and meant to tell him so plainly before he left the garden, but at this last question the merriment he had failed to see in her eyes gave place to an angry sparkle, and she quickly retorted—

"Mr. Portveldt, sir, is a Dutch gentleman, and he would never talk to me in such a way as you have done. How dare you, sir!"

Foster was really angry now, and smiled sarcastically. "He's but the master of a merchantman, and an infernal Dutchman at that."

"He is a gentleman, which you are not!" snapped Dolly fiercely; "and if he is but a merchant skipper, he commands his own ship. He is a shipowner, and a well-known Batavian merchant as well, sir; so there!"

"So I believe," said Foster wrathfully; "sells Dutch cheeses and brings them ashore with him."

"You're a spy," said Dolly contemptuously.

"Very well, Miss Scarsbrook, call me what you please. I can see your cheese merchant waddling this way now, attended by his ugly pirate of a boatswain. Doubtless he has some stock-fish on this occasion, and as stock-fish are very much like Dutchmen in one respect and I like neither, I wish you joy of him. Goodbye!" And Captain Foster swung on his heel and walked quickly out of the

garden gate. As he strode down the narrow path he brushed past the Batavian merchant, who was on his way to the Commissary's office.

"Goot tay to you, Captain Foster," said Portveldt, grinning amiably.

"Go to the devil!" replied the Englishman promptly, turning round and facing the Dutchman to give due emphasis to his remark.

Portveldt, a tall, well-made fellow, and handsomely dressed, stared at Foster's retreating figure in angry astonishment, then changing his mind about first visiting the Commissary, he opened the garden gate, and came suddenly upon Dorothy Scarsbrook seated upon a rustic bench, weeping bitterly.

"My tear yong lady, vat is de matter? I beg you to led me gomfort you."

"There is nothing the matter, Mr. Portveldt. I thank you, but you cannot be of any service to me," and Dolly buried her face in her handkerchief again.

"I am sorry ferry mooch to hear you say dat, Mees Dorotee, vor it vas mein hop dot you would dake kindtly to me."

Dolly made no answer, and then Captain Portveldt sat down beside her, his huge figure quite filling up all the remaining space.

"Mees Dorotee," he began ponderously, "de trood is dot I vas goming to see you to dell you I

vas ferry mooch in loaf mid you, und to ask you to be mein vifes; but now dot you do veep so mooch, I——"

"Say no more if you please, Mr. Portveldt," said Dolly, hastily drying her eyes. Then, rising with great dignity, she bowed and went on: "Of course I am deeply sensible of the great honour that you do me, but I can never be your wife." And then to herself: "I fancy that I have replied in a very proper manner."

"Vy, vat vas der wrong aboud me, Mees Dorotee?" pleaded Portveldt. "I vas feery yoyful in mein mind tinking dot you did loaf me some liddle bid. I have mooch money; mein haus in Batavia is mosd peautiful, und you shall have plendy servands to do all dot you vish. Oh, Mees Dorotee! vat can be wrong mid me?"

"There is nothing that I object to in you, sir, except that I do not love you. Really you cannot expect me to marry you because I have seen you half a dozen times and have treated you with politeness."

"I do hobe, Mees Dorotee, dot id is not because of dot yong mans who vas so oncivil to me yoost now dot you vill not haf me. He vas dell me to go to der tuyvel ven I did say 'goot morning' yoost now."

"It is no young man, sir. Mr. Foster is a person for whom I have a great regard, but I do

not intend to marry him. I will only marry a gentleman."

"Oh, bud, Mees Dorotee, am I not a yentlemans?"

"I do not consider masters of merchantmen gentlemen," replied Dolly with a slight sniff. "My father is an officer in the King's service, and I have been taught to——"

"Ha, ha! Mees Dorotee," laughed Portveldt good-humouredly, "dot is nod so. Your baba is but a gommissary who puys de goots vich I bring me from Batavia to sell."

"How dare you talk like that, sir? My father *is* a King's officer, and before he came here he fought for his country."

"Vell, Mees Dorotee, I do beg your pardon mooch, and I vill vight vor mein country if you vil learn to loaf me on dot account."

But Miss Dolly would listen no more, and, with a ceremonious bow, walked away. Then the Dutch merchant went to the Commissary's office to talk the matter over with her father, who told him that he would not interfere in his daughter's choice; if he could not make himself agreeable to her, neither her father nor mother could help him.

Just after sunrise next morning, Dolly, who had spent the night in tears and repentance, woke, feeling very miserable. From her opened window she could see the morning mists hanging over the

placid waters of the harbour disappearing before the first breaths of the coming south-easter. The *Policy*, she thought, could not have sailed yet, and she meant to send her lover a note, asking him to come and see her again before he left. Then she gave a little cry and sob, and her eyes filled with tears. Far down the harbour she could see the sails of the *Policy* just disappearing round a wooded headland.

An hour or so after breakfast, as Dolly was at work among her flowers, the tall figure of Sergeant Burt stood before her, and saluted—

"The *Policy* has sailed, Miss Scarsbrook," said the Sergeant, "and I have brought you a letter."

"Indeed!" said Dolly, with an air of icy indifference, turning her back upon the soldier, and digging her trowel into a little heap of soil. "I do not take any interest in merchant ships, and do not want the letter." When she glanced round again she was just in time to see Sergeant Burt standing in the roadway with a lot of tiny pieces of paper fluttering about his feet.

Something impelled her to ask: "What are you doing, Burt?"

"Mr. Foster's orders, Miss. Told me if you would not take the letter I was to destroy it."

Dolly laid her trowel down and slowly went to her room "with a bad headache," as she told her mother.

II

Nearly two years went by, and then one morning the look-out at the South Head of Sydney Harbour signalled a vessel to the north-east, and a few hours later the *Policy* was again at anchor in Sydney Cove, and Captain Foster was being warmly welcomed by the residents generally and Dolly's father in particular, who pressed him to come ashore that evening to dinner.

Among the first to board the *Policy* was Sergeant Burt, who, as soon as the others had left, was in deep converse with Captain Foster. "I'm sure she meant to take your letter, Mr. Foster," he said finally, "and that I was too quick in tearing it up."

"I'll soon know, Burt; I'll try again this evening."

At the Commissary's dinner that evening Dolly met him with a charming smile and cheeks suffused; and then, after Captain Foster had narrated the incidents of his successful whaling voyage, her parents discreetly left them to themselves in the garden.

"Dolly! I am a rough, uncultured sailor. Will you therefore forgive me my rudeness when we last parted?"

"Of course. I have forgotten it long ago, and I am very sorry we parted bad friends."

"You make me very happy, Dolly. I have been

speaking to your mother, and she has told me that she thinks you do care for me. Is it so? May I again——"

"Now, Captain Foster, why cannot we be friends without—without anything else. I will not pretend that I do not understand your meaning, but I tell you, once and for all, I don't want to be married. Really," and she smiled brightly, "you are as bad as Mr. Portveldt."

"Very well, Miss Dorothy," said Foster with annoying equanimity, "I won't allude to the subject again. But what has the Dutchman been doing? Where is he now?"

Dolly laughed merrily. "Oh, Captain Foster, I really have no right to show you this letter, but it is so very amusing that I cannot help doing so," and she took a letter from her pocket.

"Oh, he has been writing to you, has he?"

"Now don't speak in that bullying manner, sir, or I shall not let you hear its contents."

"Very well, Dolly; but how came you to get the letter? We are at war with the Dutch Settlements now, you know."

"That is the amusing part of it. Now listen, and I will read it to you;" and Dolly spread out a large sheet of paper, and read aloud in mimicking tones—

"Mein dear Mees Dolly,—You did vant ein

loafer who could vight vor his coundry, and vould haf no man who vas yoost ein merchant. Very goot. I mineself now command the privateer *Swift*, vich vas used to be sailing in gompany mit *La Brave* und *La Mouche* in der service of der French Republic, und did den vight und beat all der Anglische ships in der Anglische Channel. Id is drue dot your *La Minerve* did by shance von tay capture der *Swift*, and sold her to the American beoples, but our Batavian merchants did buy her from them, und now I haf god de command. Und now dot your goundrymens do annoys der Deutsche Settlements in our Easd Indies, ve do mean to beat dem every dimes ve cadgh dem in dese zees. Und I do send mein ledder to you, mein tear Mees Dorotee, by der greasy old vale-ship *Mary Ann*, yoost to led you know dot I haf not vorgotten you mid your bride eye. Und ven I haf gaptured all der Anglische ships in der East Indies I vill sail mein *Swift* to Sydney and claim you vor mein vrau, und do you nod be vrightened. I vill dake care dot you und your beople shall not be hurt, because I do loaf you ferry mooch. Der master of der *Mary Ann* vill dell you I vas ferry goot to him for your sake. I did but take his gargo, and did give him und his grew liberdy to go to Sydney und dake this letter to you, mein vrau, in der dime to gom, as I did dell him.—I remain your loafing RICHARD PORTVELDT."

Foster jumped to his feet. "The rascally Dutch swab, to dare to——"

"To dare to write to me," said Dolly laughingly.

"To dare to write to you! To suppose for one moment that you—oh, d—— the fellow! If I come across him, I'll——"

"But all the same, he's very brave," said Dolly demurely; "he is fighting for his country, you know."

"The boasting fool!" ejaculated Foster contemptuously.

"But he *is* captain of the *Swift*, and the *Swift did* beat some of the English ships. I have heard my father say that."

"Oh, yes. Three privateers did manage to cut off some of our little despatch vessels in the Channel; but this fat Dutchman, Portveldt, had no hand in it."

"But this 'fat Duchman, Portveldt,' *did* capture the *Mary Ann*, and her master *did* give me this letter, and—and I was *so* angry."

"The master of the *Mary Ann* must have been a fool."

"Why so—for merely executing a commission? But wait, there is a postscript that will interest you particularly. Now listen while I read it," and Dolly, again mimicking Portveldt's English, read—

"Dell dot oncivil yong mans Voster who vas dell

me to go to ter tuyvel, dot I vill sendt der *Bolicy* und her master mit der grew to der tuyvel if he gomes mein vay mit his zeep."

"Now, Captain Foster, what do you think of that, pray?"

"Very pretty talk; what do *you* think of it?"

"Well, I'm only a poor little woman; but if I were a man I would——"

"Exactly so, Dolly. Well, I am a man, and the *Policy* has brought a letter of marque with her from England this time, and so I may meet——"

"Oh, Captain Foster!" and Dolly's eyes brightened, "I *am* glad; but—but—*please*, for my sake, don't get killed."

A fortnight later, when Foster bade Dolly good-bye for another six months, she told him softly that she would be glad—oh, so very glad!—to hear news of him. A whaling voyage was so very dangerous, and he might get hurt or killed.

And this time, as the *Policy* sailed and Foster saw Dolly waving to him from the steps of the Commissary's office, he felt pretty sure that the letter of marque had advanced his suit considerably.

* * * * *

Fourteen days out from Sydney the *Policy* took her first whale, greatly to the delight of old Stevenson and the crew, who looked upon such early luck

as a certain indication of a good cruise. After "trying-out" Foster kept on to the northward to the sperm-whaling grounds in the Moluccas. Three days later they spoke the *Endicott*, of Nantucket, whose captain gave Foster a kindly warning not to go cruising further north, for there were several Batavian privateers looking out for the English whalers that were then due on the cruising ground. Then the American wished him luck and goodbye.

Old Stevenson's face fell; then he swore. "I suppose we have to turn tail, sir, and try what we can do to the southward and I believe we'd be a full ship in three months or less up in the Moluccas."

"So do I, and I'm going there."

"But it's dangerous waters, sir; we don't want to lose the ship and rot in prison in Batavia."

"Mr. Stevenson, I am an Englishman, and Hurry Brothers did not get a letter of marque for this ship for nothing. You ought to know that to turn back means an empty ship. It is our duty to go to our proper cruising ground and cruise till we are a full ship; and all the infernal Dutchmen in the world mustn't frighten us."

"Very good, sir," said the old mate cheerfully, "but, all the same, *I* don't want us to get served like that fellow Portveldt served the old *Mary Ann*."

Another five weeks passed. So far, "greasy" luck had attended the *Policy*, for she had taken

sixteen more sperm whales, the last of which was killed in about 8° S. and 120° E., in the Flores Sea. But misfortune had come upon the ship in other respects, and Foster was in no small anxiety about his crew, nearly all of whom were ill from lead-poisoning. This had been brought about by drinking water from leaden tanks in which oil had once been stored.

A bright look-out was kept, for the ship was now right in the spot where it was likely she might meet with the Dutch privateers.

It was Stevenson's watch, and as he walked the poop he stopped suddenly, for the look-out reported a sail to the W.S.W. Foster came on deck at once and went aloft. In a quarter of an hour it was evident that the stranger bore towards them. The wind was south-east, and very little of it.

"What are you going to do?" asked the mate. "I fancy this is one of the Dutchmen who are on the look-out for us."

"So do I," answered Foster, "I'll tell you what I am going to do: brace sharp up on the larboard tack and run down to her. I am not going to run away from *one* infernal Dutchman, and I can only see one of 'em."

"You're captain of the ship, and you can do as you please; but I am hanged if I think you'll pull it off this time. Half the crew are sick, and this fellow looks as if he meant fighting."

"All hands on deck; starboard forebrace!" was all the answer Foster made. Then he went to the signal locker, and getting out the American ensign, with his own hands ran it up to the peak, hoping by this means to get close enough to the other ship to prevent *her* from running away from a fight, if the captain should turn out not one of the fighting sort.

As soon as the sails were trimmed the skipper walked to the break of the poop, and, with the air of a captain of a seventy-four, gave the order, "Clear ship for action!"

Then the mate ventured to remark that half of the guns were down below on the 'tween decks, where they had been put out of the way for the generally peaceful occupation of whaling.

"Well, get 'm up. What the devil do you think I mean by clearing for action?"

Accordingly, the six-pounders were hoisted upon deck and quickly mounted, what little powder and shot the *Policy* carried was brought into a handy place, and the mate, with something of a smile, reported, "Ship cleared for action, sir."

"Very good, Mr. Stevenson. Now, my lads, I reckon this ship is one of the Dutch fleet sent to clear us whalers out of these seas. Well, as he seems to be alone, I think we have a fair chance of turning the tables upon him. Anyhow,

I am going to try. I know some of you are pretty sick, but I am sure that a crew of English sailors, even when they are sick, can lick twice their number of muddle-headed Dutchmen any day."

In those days, British ships were manned by British seaman, and Captain Foster could talk like this without saying anything offensive to the British merchant service. Nowadays such an observation about "Dutchmen" would be a personal insult to four-fifths of the crew of a British merchant ship.

The men, including the mate, received the speech with a cheer, and one of them sang out "Haul down the Stars and Stripes. We don't want to fight under that."

To which Captain Foster, who knew what he was about, merely replied, "I am not a fool!"

Towards the close of the afternoon the ships were within gunshot of each other, and the Dutchman ran up his colours. As they drew closer, the foreign skipper's glass showed him the nationality of the *Policy*, and he at once opened fire upon her with one of his six eighteen-pounders.

As the shot hummed overhead between the *Policy's* fore and main masts, down came the American colours and up went the British ensign, and at the same moment Foster fired such of his guns as bore upon the enemy.

As soon as the report of the guns had died away, Foster sprang into one of his quarter-boats and hailed the other ship.

"Ship ahoy!" he roared "why do you fire at me?"

"Ha, ha! I know you," came back in mocking tones. "Now vill I sendt you to der tuyvel, you greasy valer mans. I am Captain Portveldt, und dis is der *Swift*. Vill you surrunder, or vill I smash you to beices?"

For answer, Foster, who had now come very close to his enemy, fired his tiny broadside, his men, sick as they were running cheerfully from the guns to the braces to manœuvre the *Policy* clear of the privateer's fire, and then back again to the guns.

The sun had now set, but far into the darkness of the tropical night the running fight continued, Foster always out-manœuvring the Dutchman, and the crews of both vessels, when they closed near enough to be heard, cursing and mocking at each other. Owing to the darkness and the extremely bad gunnery on both sides, little blood was spilt, and the damage done was mostly confined to the sails and rigging. Now and then a eighteen-pound shot hulled the *Policy*, and one went clean through her amidships. Suddenly, for some cause or other, about midnight, a light was shown in the privateer's stern, and Foster's

second mate at once sent a lucky shot at it, with the result that the six-pound ball so damaged the *Swift's* rudder that she became unmanageable. And then, a few minutes later, another shot dismounted one of her guns by striking it on the muzzle, and ere the Dutchman's crew knew what was happening, a final broadside from the whaler brought down her two topsails and did other damage aloft. That practically ended the battle.

So thought Captain Portveldt, who now hailed the *Policy* in not quite so boastful a voice as when the vessels met earlier in the day.

"Captain Voster, I haf hauled down mein flag. Mein grew will vight no more, and I must surrender."

A cheer broke from the whaler's crew.

"Very well, Captain Portveldt," called out Foster; "lower a boat, and come on board with half your crew. But don't try on any boarding tricks, or you will be the worse for it."

The meeting between the two skippers, notwithstanding the cause, was good-humoured enough, for Portveldt, apart from his boastfulness, was not a bad fellow.

"Vell, Captain Voster," he said as he stepped on board the *Policy's* deck, followed by his big boatswain (who was wounded in the face by a splinter) and half his crew, "you haf broved der besd mans; und now I suppose you vill lead me

like a liddle dog mit a sdring, und dake me to Sydney und make vun mit der young lady about me."

"No, no," answered Foster, "I am not so bad as all that. Come below and have a glass of grog."

* * * * *

At daylight one morning some weeks later two ships appeared in sight off Sydney Heads. Those who were on the look-out were alarmed, for it was seen that both vessels were armed, and it was conjectured that the ships must be part of an enemy's squadron which had determined to make an attack upon the settlement of Port Jackson.

In a very short time an excited crowd gathered together along the line of cliffs of the outer South Head, each one asking his fellow what was to be done. Horsemen carried the news into Sydney, and every moment fresh numbers arrived to swell the crowd of spectators on the cliffs. A strange sight they must have presented, comprising, as they did, all sorts and conditions of men—settlers, naval and military officers, soldiers of the New South Wales Regiment, and a number of the better class of convicts.

Of course the Deputy Acting Assistant Commissary-General was among the officers anxiously watching the ships from the heights that over-

looked the harbour, and with him were Dolly and her mother.

Presently Dolly, catching sight of her father's anxious face, began to cry, and turned to her mother. "Ah!" she said "it has all come true, and he has come to destroy the settlement!"

"What has come true, and who is going to destroy the settlement?" said her father sharply. And then Dolly, feeling very frightened and miserable, told him of Portveldt's letter, the receipt of which she had concealed from every one but Foster. The D.A.A.C.G. laughed at first, but then added, "but all the same, though 'twas but empty bluster, I had better tell his Excellency about it; it is just possible that the Dutch have planned an expedition against us."

At half-past ten, in response to a signal made from the look-out at South Head by the officer in charge there, his Excellency Governor King sent Lieutenant Houston, of his Majesty's ship *Investigator*, then anchored in Sydney Cove, to the naval officer in command at South Head.

The *Investigator* was Flinders' ship, the gallant old tub of 334 tons which surveyed a great part of the northern coast, and was at the time of which we write lying rotting in Sydney, condemned after completing her second voyage of discovery in June, 1803.

Then the Governor was told of Dolly's letter,

but he was not the man to take fright at the approach of the enemy, although he had no defence force as it is now understood in New South Wales, nor had he a gold-laced staff of officers with elaborate "defence schemes" against possible raids of Japanese or Russians by way of Exmouth Gulf or Port Darwin.

In that year Governer King's force did not take long to be marshalled. The drums beat to arms, and the New South Wales Corps and the Loyal Association immediately formed into line on the shores of the Cove.

At eleven o'clock a trooper arrived at Government House with intelligence that one of the vessels appeared under British colours, and the other was flying a Union Jack triumphant over a Dutch Jack. Following this message there soon came another, bringing the certain intelligence that one of the ships was an English whaler bringing into port her Batavian prize. So on receipt of this news, and just as the word to march was about to be given, the officer in command ordered his force to return to barracks.

At two in the afternoon, with the whole of the settlement agog with excitement, the two vessels sailed slowly up the harbour before a light north-east breeze, and came to anchor in Sydney Cove, close to the *Investigator*, on board of which ship the Governor and a number of naval officers

awaited their arrival. For once discipline was relaxed, and Captain King had good-naturedly permitted the townspeople to throng on board to learn all the news about the *Policy's* prize. As Captain Foster made his way to the quarter-deck, he saw that behind the Governor and his staff were Dolly and her parents and several ladies.

In a very few minutes he made his report, and the Governor again shook his hand warmly; but the look in Dolly's eyes and the pressure of her hand were the young seaman's sweetest reward, for it told him that she had surrendered.

Then, returning to his own ship, he was warmly greeted by Sergeant Burt, and for a few moments the two remained talking in the whaler's cabin. Then, just as Foster was ready to go ashore, Mr. Scarsbrook, who had been inspecting the captured privateer, came on board, bringing Dolly with him.

Whilst they were all chatting merrily together Captain Portveldt made his appearance, and with the most perfect *sang-froid* saluted Dolly and her father.

"Vell, Mees Dorotee, you see I have gome back, at der bressing invidadion of mein goot friendt, Captain Voster here, und I do vish him mit you blendy of habbiness."

And Dolly, who at first meant to meet him with a sarcastic little speech, felt her eyes fill with tears at the manly way in which he bore his misfortune,

and could only falter out some few words of consolation.

Then there was a Prize Court, and—

"Mr. Charles Sparrow Foster, commander of the whaler and letter of marque called the *Policy*, presented to the Court a memorial stating his capture of the *Swift* on the 12th day of September, off the island of Flores, she being under Dutch colours . . . and the property of subjects of a Power at war with his Britannic Majesty, and praying also that the Court would be pleased to grant an award of condemnation in his favour in order that the said prize should be for the advantage of himself, his owners, and his ship's company."

and the Court having heard confirmatory evidence from Richard Portveldt, a subject of the Batavian Republic, to the effect—

"That he commanded the *Swift*; that everything on board of her was Dutch property, and she belonged to Messrs. Wirry and Talman, of Batavia, and himself, all of whom were residents of Batavia, who purchased her for the sum of 18,000 dols.: that she was taken up by the Dutch East India Company at Batavia; and was on her way thither when she was captured by the *Policy*, &c."—

accordingly condemned the prize, which was advertised in the *Sydney Gazette* for sale by auction, Mr. Lord, the auctioneer, setting forth that he would sell—

"At his warehouse, Sydney, at noon precisely, the 3rd of November, the good ship *Swift*, prize to *Policy*, Charles Foster, commander. French built in the year 1800. Was condemned a prize to his Majesty's ship *La Minerva*, and sold in 1801 to the Americans, as appears by the bill of sale, and by them sold to the Dutch at Batavia, where she was examined, copper-bolted, and new coppered in August, 1802. It is unnecessary to say anything respecting the properties of the *Swift* further than that she was the companion of *La Brave* and *La Mouche*, which so very much harassed the British in Europe, and set all our cruisers at defiance until her capture, prior to which she was justly celebrated as the fastest sailing-vessel the French Republic had."

The prize was knocked down for £3,000, and Captain Foster's share was spent in a handsome wedding present for Dolly, which, at her particular request, took the form of a passage to Batavia and a hundred guineas delivered to Captain Portveldt immediately after the marriage ceremony.

The Adventure of Elizabeth Morey, of New York

IN the sea story of Australia, from the days of Captain Phillip in 1788, to the end of the "fifties" in the present century, American ships and seamen have no little part. First they came into the harbour of Sydney Cove as traders carrying provisions for sale to the half-starved settlers, then as whalers, and before another thirty years had passed, the starry banner might be met with anywhere in the Pacific, from the sterile shores of the Aleutian Islands to the coasts of New Zealand and Tasmania.

Early one morning in October, 1804, the American ship *Union* sailed in through Sydney Heads, and dropped anchor in the Cove. She was last from Tongatabu, the principal island of the Friendly Group. As soon as she had been boarded by the naval officer in charge of the port, and her papers examined, the master stated that he had had a very exciting adventure with

the Tongatabu natives, who had attempted to cut off the ship, and that there was then on board a young woman named Elizabeth Morey, whom he had rescued from captivity among the savages.

In a few minutes the young woman made her appearance in the main cabin, and was introduced to the officer. Her age was about six-and-twenty, and her manners "extremely engaging;" yet whilst she expressed her willingness to tell the story of her adventures among the islanders, she declined to say anything of her birth or parentage beyond the fact that she was a native of New York, and some years previously had made her way to the Cape of Good Hope.

Her extraordinary narrative was borne out in all details as far as her rescue was concerned by the master of the *Union*, who, she said, had treated her with undeviating kindness and respect.

This is her story:—

In February of the year 1802, when she was living at the Cape of Good Hope, she made the acquaintance of a Captain Melton, the master of the American ship *Portland*. His dashing appearance, his command of apparently unlimited money, and his protestations of affection for the unfortunate girl soon led her to respond to his advances, and ultimately to consent to accompany him on a voyage to the islands of the South Pacific.

After a prosperous voyage the *Portland* arrived at what is now known as Nukualofa Harbour, on the Island of Tongatabu. Within a few hours after anchoring, Captain Melton received a note from a white man named Doyle, who was the only European living on the island, asking him to come on shore and visit the chief, who particularly wished to see him and secure his aid in repelling an invasion from the neighbouring group of islands known as Haabai. Had Melton known that this man Doyle was an escaped convict from Van Dieman's Land, he would at least have been careful; had he known that the man was, in addition, a treacherous and bloodthirsty villain, he would have hove-up anchor, and, sailing away, escaped his fate. But Doyle, in his note, enumerated the advantages that would accrue to him (Melton) by assisting the chief, and the seaman fell into the trap. "You must try," said the writer of the letter, "to send at least one boat's crew well armed."

Melton was a man with an elastic conscience. Without troubling his head as to the right or wrong side of this quarrel among savages, he promptly complied with the request of the beachcomber, and called for volunteers; the whole of the ship's company responded. The chief mate, Gibson, picked four men; Anderson, the second officer, eight men, and these were at once despatched on shore by the captain.

The engagement came off on the following day, and the American allies of the chief (whom Miss Morey calls Ducara) inflicted fearful slaughter upon the enemy, and returned to the ship highly satisfied with themselves, and their native friends, who promised them every indulgence likely to gratify their tastes.

In the evening Ducara himself came on board, and politely thanked the captain for his assistance. He slept all night in the cuddy, attended by Doyle, his minister of destruction, and took his leave early in the morning, promising to send ample refreshments on board in part return for favours received, and requesting that boats should be sent that evening to convey his gifts to the ship. Within a few hours after the chief had returned to the shore, many hundreds of stalwart natives were seen carrying baskets of provisions down to the beach, and piling them in heaps in readiness for the boats. Melton, at this stage, seemed to have some sort of suspicion in his mind about sending the boats ashore after dark, for he gave the mate instructions not to despatch them until he gave orders. The mate, however, who had been smitten by the beauty of a Tongan girl who had expressed her unqualified approval of his fighting capabilities in a very unconventional manner, had the utmost confidence in the good will of the natives, and took it upon himself to disobey his captain's

commands; consequently two boats were sent off just as daylight was breaking, and whilst the skipper lay asleep in his cabin.

Within a couple of hours the smaller of the two boats returned, loaded with yams, "gnatu" (tappa cloth), baked pigs, and fish. She was steered by the beachcomber, Doyle, and was rowed by two of the ship's boys, instead of the four men who had taken her ashore; these boys, it must be mentioned, had formed part of the crew of the larger boat, and had remained on the beach whilst the men had gone into the village at the invitation of Doyle and his fellow-conspirators. They, therefore, knew nothing of what had kept their shipmates from returning to the boats, when Doyle appeared and said he wished to go off to the ship, and that the others would follow later on.

Accompanying the boat was a flotilla of canoes, filled with hundreds of savages, who were allowed to come alongside, though the girl Morey was so terrified by their savage aspect that she begged her lover to instantly recall the rest of his men and heave up anchor. Melton, however, although he was now in a state of suspense owing to the non-appearance of his boats' crews, answered her calmly enough.

"The two boys and Doyle say that the hands went up to the chief's house to see a native dance," he said. "I'll punish them for it when they return."

Meanwhile the boat was unloaded, and again sent on shore with the two boys, and Doyle's native friends clambered up on board from any accessible part of the ship. The beachcomber himself, a wild-looking, dark-skinned ruffian, who had clothed himself in a shirt and trousers, now came aft and again assured the captain that he need feel no alarm at the great number of naked savages who now thronged the deck, from the windlass right aft to the wheel. Perhaps, however, the villain had some feeling of humanity in his vile heart, for seeing the terrified face of the girl Morey, he suggested that she should go below until the natives had returned to the shore.

But so impressed was she with a sense of imminent peril that she refused to leave the poop, and begged Melton earnestly, "for God's sake to take heed, and not thrust himself among the savages on the main deck."

The beachcomber gave her a glance—half rage, half pity; then with his left hand he suddenly dashed her aside, and with a ferocious yell sprang at Melton and thrust a dagger into the throat of the unfortunate man. In an instant his savage followers began their work of slaughter, and Mr. Gibson, the chief mate, the boatswain, and four seamen were soon lying dead upon the blood-stained decks, their heads battered out of all human semblance by the clubs of the islanders.

Two lads, Miss Morey, and her negro servant-woman, were spared, but hurried down below.

The bodies of the murdered men were at once thrown overboard to the sharks by Doyle's orders, and he then directed the natives to clear the decks.

Elizabeth Morey, terrified out of her senses at the dreadful scenes she had witnessed, attempted to spring overboard, but the beachcomber caught her as she came on deck, urged her not to be frightened, and promised her "in the name of the Virgin" that no harm should come to her. As soon as the decks had been ridden of all traces of the bloody work just completed, the half-unconscious girl was lifted over the side, placed in a canoe, taken on shore, and handed over to the care of a chief's wife.

When she came to her senses she learnt from Doyle that all who were left alive of the ship's company were herself and servant, a Malay seaman, five boys, and an old sailor, who was a dwarf; the latter had evidently been spared, either on account of the natives ranking him as a boy, or from their aversion to inflict injuries upon any one physically or mentally afflicted.

The following three days were spent by the natives in unloading the ship, the work being carried on in the most systematic manner under the command of Doyle, the survivors of the crew being compelled to assist in the task. The cargo,

which consisted mainly of bales of cotton, was got on shore in something less than a week; then the islanders began to dismantle the ill-fated ship. By the eighth day all the sails except the fore and main topsails were unbent and taken ashore.

On the afternoon of this day but half a dozen natives were on board; they, with the five "boys" (probably lads under eighteen years of age), and the dwarf sailor before mentioned, were "spelling" for an hour or so before beginning to unbend the topsails, when, noticing that their captors were off their guard, the brave little man determined to retake the ship. In a few minutes he gained over his youthful shipmates to the attempt; they promised to stand by him to the last. Quietly arming themselves with axes, with iron belaying pins, with handspikes, with anything heavy and deadly they could lay their hands upon, they waited for the signal to begin the attack. Doyle, the blood-stained murderer, lay upon the skylight under the awning, half asleep and unsuspecting of danger; his native associates either slept or lounged about the main deck.

A few hurried, whispered words passed between the six whites; then the dwarf, carrying an axe negligently in his hand, ascended to the poop and laid it down on the deck. Then he turned, and his quick seaman's eye took in the surroundings. The trade wind was blowing freshly, the ship (she

was a full-rigged ship, though under five hundred tons), was straining at her hempen cable, and the low, palm-clad shore was nearly two miles away. He picked up the axe and running towards Doyle, buried the weapon to the head in his bosom!

In less than five minutes the dreadful work was done, and Doyle and the six Tongans were weltering in their gore upon the very deck which was still stained by the traces of their own crimes. Before the natives on shore could realise what had happened, the cable was cut, the topsails loosed and sheeted home, and the *Portland* standing out to sea through the dangerous network of reefs which surrounded the harbour. Her recapture was a bloody deed, but the law of self-preservation is inexorable under such circumstances.

Elizabeth Morey, aroused from a troubled slumber by the cries of her captors, came to the doorway of the chief's house, and stood watching the ship, which, though only under her fore and main topsails, was fast slipping through the water. In two hours the *Portland* was safe, and the broken-hearted girl sank upon her knees and wept. She was now utterly alone, for her negro servant woman had gone on board the ship with Doyle to get some of her clothing, and had been carried off. The only remaining member of the *Portland's* crew was a Malay—a man of whom she had an instinctive dread; for, since the massacre of

the ship's company he had one day asked her with a mocking grin if she could not "clean his coat." His coat was Melton's white duck jacket, and the ensanguined garment brought all the horror of her lover's death before her again.

Then followed fifteen long, long months of horror, misery, and agony. She was a woman, and her terrible fate evokes the warmest pity. Whatever may have been her past before she met Captain Melton and accompanied him on his fateful voyage, her sufferings during those fifteen dreadful months may be imagined but not written of nor suggested, except by the neurotic "new woman" writer, who loves to dwell upon things vile, degrading, terrifying, and abhorrent to the clean and healthy mind.

* * * * *

In August, 1804, the American whaler *Union*, of Nantucket, after having refreshed at Sydney Cove, as Port Jackson was then called, sailed on a sperm-whaling cruise among the South Sea Islands. She arrived at Tongatabu on the last day of September. As soon as the anchor was let go a fleet of canoes appeared, and the occupants made the most friendly demonstrations towards Captain Pendleton and his officers. In the leading canoe was a man whom the captain took to be a Malay, and upon being questioned this surmise proved to be correct. In broken English he informed

Pendleton that the ship would be provided with plenty of fresh food, water, and wood, if the ship's boats were sent ashore. The captain's boat was thereupon swung out and lowered, and manned by six men, the captain and Mr. John Boston, the supercargo, going with them. These people were armed with six muskets and two cutlasses.

As soon as the boat was well clear of the ship the natives became very troublesome, clambering up the chain plates, and forcing themselves on board in great numbers. The chief mate, Daniel Wright, seems to have shown more sense than most of the poor fools who, by their own negligence, brought about—and still bring about even to the present day—these South Sea tragedies. He got his men together and tried to drive off the intruders, but despite his endeavours thirty or forty of them kept to the deck, and their countrymen in the canoes alongside rapidly passed them up a number of war-clubs.

Wright, with the greatest tact, and with apparently good-humoured force, at last succeeded in clearing the decks and bustling all the natives except the chief, over the side into their canoes. He (Wright) was a big, brawny, New Englander, had served in the American Navy before he had taken to whaling, and knew the value of coolness and discipline in an emergency, though he felt much inclined to pistol the chief, who all this time

had been pretending to support his authority, though actually telling his people to be "more patient, as the time had not yet come."

This chief, whose name is not given in the *Sydney Gazette* of 1804, but who may have been the same "Ducara" of the *Portland* massacre, or one of Ducara's *matabulis*, at last took his leave with the usual protestations of regard so natural to even the present Christianised Tongan native of this year of grace 1900, when he means mischief, even in the minor matter of cheating or defrauding his white creditor. Descending into his canoe, he led the whole flotilla to the beach. Then the mate hoisted the ensign, and fired a gun as a warning to those of the ship's company on shore to return.

No notice was taken of the signal, and presently through his glass Mr. Wright saw that the captain's boat was lying broadside on to the beach, surrounded by a crowd of islanders, and without a boat-keeper. This was sufficiently alarming. It was now late in the afternoon, and Captain Pendleton had been absent five hours. He at once came to the conclusion that the people who had gone ashore in the boat were either prisoners or had been murdered. To send another boat after them, he felt sure, would only lead to the destruction of the whole ship's company in detail, and the ultimate loss of the ship without there being the least chance of effecting any good. So he

called the hands aft, explained the situation, and began to prepare to resist capture. All the available firearms were loaded, heavy stones which formed the ship's ballast, were placed along the waterways fore and aft in readiness to smash the canoes which he anticipated would come alongside, the trying-out works fires were lighted, and the huge try-pots filled with water, which when boiling would add to their means of defence, by pouring it down in bucketsful upon the savages; the cable was prepared for slipping, sails loosened, and every other precaution which suggested itself to him made.

The sun dropped into the western sea-rim, and there was still no sign of the captain's boat. On the shore an ominous silence prevailed, though now and then it would be broken by the weird, resonant boom of a conch-shell. The night was passed in the greatest anxiety by all on board, every man, musket in hand, keeping a keen look-out.

Almost as the dawn broke, two canoes were seen to put off from Nukualofa beach, and come towards the ship. They were manned by young Tongan "bucks" who, in reply to the mate's questions as to the whereabouts of the captain and his crew, answered him with gestures which the ship's company rightly enough construed as meaning that their comrades had all been killed, and

that *their* turn would come shortly. This so enraged the seamen that they tried to induce Mr. Wright to open fire on the canoes, destroy them, and get the ship away before worse happened. But the mate, hoping that his people on shore were still alive, and that he could yet rescue them, refused to comply, and the whole of that day and night passed without further happening.

On the following morning several canoes came within hail and then lay-to. In one of them was the Malay, who asked the mate to come ashore, as the captain and the supercargo wished to see him. The mate temporised and requested the Malay to come on board and explain matters, but he refused and returned to the shore.

In a few hours he reappeared at the head of a fleet of canoes, and then, to Mr. Wright's intense astonishment, he saw that the Malay was accompanied by a young white woman, who was sitting on the for'ard outrigger of the canoe of which the Malay was steersman. The flotilla brought to within pistol-shot of the ship, and the woman stood up and called to him in English—

"Come on shore and see the captain. He wants to speak to you."

The mate made no answer, but beckoned to the fleet of canoes to come nearer. And then, mercifully, as he took another look at the white woman, he saw her, when the surrounding savages

were not watching, shake her head vehemently to him not to comply with the request she had made.

The flotilla came still nearer, and again Elizabeth Morey was made to repeat the request for him to "come on shore and see the captain." Wright, surmising that she was acting under coercion, appeared to give little heed to her request, but told the Malay, who seemed to direct the natives, that he would wait for the captain. Then the fleet of canoes turned, and headed for the shore, and the captive white woman gave the mate a despairing, agonised look that not only filled him with the deepest commiseration for her, but almost convinced him that poor Pendleton and the others were dead.

Another night of wearing anxiety passed, and again with the dawn a single canoe came off, manned by half a dozen armed natives steered by the Malay and carrying Miss Morey. This canoe was followed by many others, but the leading one alone came close enough to the whaleship to communicate. Little by little her savage crew drew nearer, watching every movement of those on board with the utmost suspicion; the mate, who was standing at the break of the poop on the starboard side, desired them to come closer, holding in his hand a loaf of bread, which he said he wanted to give to the white woman. The loaf was

enclosed in a piece of white paper, on which he had written these words—

"I fear that all on shore are murdered. I will wait here a few days in the hope that you may be able to escape to us."

For some minutes the savages watched the white man, who, apparently disgusted with his attempts to induce them to come closer and take the loaf of bread, placed it on the rail and lit his pipe. The Malay again urged him to come ashore and "see the captain" but Wright made an impatient gesture and told him he must come closer if he wanted to talk. The scoundrel did bring the canoe a few fathoms nearer, and then stopped her way.

Then the girl, unable to restrain herself any longer, stood up and cried out—

"All your friends on shore have been killed," then she leapt into the water and swam towards the ship.

A yell of rage burst from the natives in the canoes, but it was answered by the fire of musketry from the ship and the thunder of two carronades, which, loaded with iron nuts and bolts, had been in readiness, one on the poop, the other on the topgallant forecastle—and the girl succeeded in reaching the ship's side in time to take hold of a life-buoy secured to a line which was thrown to her, and Wright, jumping overboard,

helped the poor creature up over the side into safety.

Then began a desperate and furious assault to capture the ship. The savages, led by the renegade Malay, made three successive attempts to board, but were each time beaten back by Wright and his gallant seamen, and the crystal water around the *Union* was soon reddened to a deep hue. Meanwhile the cable had been slipped, and, like the *Portland*, the *Union's* company were saved from death by the freshness of the trade-wind alone. In half an hour after the last attack had been repelled, the ship was out of danger from pursuit. As soon as the vessel had cleared the passage Wright hove her to, and went down below to Miss Morey, who, exhausted and almost hysterical as she was, yet answered his questions readily.

"You must forgive me, madam, but it is my duty to at once ask you an important question. Are you *sure* that Captain Pendleton and the supercargo are dead? I cannot take the ship away if there is any uncertainty about their fate."

"I beseech you, sir, to have no doubts. I saw the two gentlemen beaten to death by clubs before my eyes. . . . They were sitting down to eat when they were murdered. One was killed by the Malay man, the other by an old *matabuli*.[1] . . . Oh, for

[1] Counsellor.

God's sake, sir, do not delay! The natives have been planning to capture this ship and murder her people for the past three days."

Then as she became more collected she satisfied him that all of Captain Pendleton's party had been cruelly and treacherously murdered, and also told him her own terrible story previous to the arrival of the *Union*.

The destruction of poor Pendleton and Mr. Boston had been planned, she said, by the Malay; and when he and his native friends found that they could not induce Mr. Wright to further weaken his ship's company by sending another boat's crew on shore, so that the *Union* might the more easily be captured, she was ordered under the most awful threats to act as decoy. Resolved to upset their diabolical plan, or die in the attempt, she gave an apparently cheerful assent to the meditated scheme of murder, and hence her appearance in the canoe with the treacherous Malay.

Under the kindly care of Mr. (now Captain) Wright, the young woman soon regained her health and strength in a great measure and her delight knew no bounds when he announced to her his intention of returning to Sydney Cove to refit before proceeding home to America. The *Union*, as we have before stated, entered Sydney harbour in October, 1804, and before that time the simple gratitude of the rescued girl to her rescuer

had changed into a deeper and tenderer feeling. But we must not anticipate.

As soon as Captain Wright had made his report to the New South Wales authorities, Miss Morey went on shore, where she was treated most hospitably by the wives of some of the military officers, whilst Wright was refitting his ship.

A few days afterwards there arrived in Sydney Harbour an East India ship, the captain of which gave Wright some interesting particulars concerning the *Portland* and Captain Melton. The latter had had a peculiar history. At the end of the year 1800 he appeared in Manila, where he was entrusted with the command of a brig belonging to a Mr. John Stewart Kerr, the American Consul of that city. His orders were to proceed to Batavia, and there dispose of his cargo, bringing in return saleable goods for the Manila market. He was given also a letter of credit for $20,000 the better to load the vessel. On arrival at Batavia he sold the cargo and the brig into the bargain, and purchased in her place the *Portland*, a ship of about 400 tons. From Batavia he wrote to Kerr—he seemed to have been the Captain "Bully" Hayes of his time—informed him of what he had done and mentioned that as he intended to make "a long pleasure cruise" among the islands of the South Pacific, he did not expect to return to Manila for some considerable time!

He also, it is needless to say, duly cashed his letter of credit for $20,000, which six months afterwards was duly presented and taken up by Mr. Kerr.

The *Portland* was then chartered by a firm of Dutch merchants at Batavia to proceed to Serra Bay to load rice and return to Batavia. Melton sailed to Serra Bay, loaded his cargo of rice, and instead of returning to Batavia, went to the Isle of France and there cheerfully sold it. The next account of him received at Manila was that he was having a "real good time" at the Cape of Good Hope, where his fascinating manners and command of money (Kerr's money) made him many friends. Suddenly, however, he and the *Portland* disappeared, and Elizabeth Morey, as we have mentioned, accompanied him. He had given out that he was bound for the North-west coast of America, to enter into the fur trade, but, beyond that rumour, nothing more was heard of him until the *Union* arrived at Port Jackson, and Elizabeth Morey told the tale of his dreadful end.

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No further mention of the names of Captain Daniel Wright, Elizabeth Morey, or the good ship *Union* appear in the early Sydney records after 1806; but that the girl's rescue by the gallant mate of the whaleship led to her ultimate happiness we can safely assume, for in the year 1836 there

were married in Honolulu, Sandwich Islands, one "Marie Kaiulani Shepherd, daughter of John Shepherd, to Daniel Morey Wright, master of the ship *Patience*, of New Bedford, and son of Daniel and Elizabeth Wright, of Salem, U.S.A."

The Americans in the South Seas

PERHAPS the proper title of this article should be "The Influence of American Enterprise upon the Maritime Development of the first Colony in Australia," but as such a long-winded phrase would convey, at the outset, no clearer conception of the subject-matter than that of "The Americans in the South Seas," we trust our readers will be satisfied with the simpler title.

It is curious, when delving into some of the dry-as-dust early Australian and South Sea official records, or reading the more interesting old newspapers and books of "Voyages," to note how soon the Americans "took a hand" in the South Sea trade, and how quickly they practically monopolised the whaling industry in the Pacific, from the Antipodes to Behring Straits.

The English Government which had despatched the famous "First Fleet" of convict transports to the then unknown shores of Botany Bay, had

not counted upon an American intrusion into the Australian Seas, and when it came, Cousin Jonathan did not receive a warm welcome from the English officials stationed in the newly founded settlement on the shore of Sydney Cove, as the first settlement in Australia was then called. This was scarcely to be wondered at, for many of those officers who formed part of the "First Fleet" expedition had fought in the war of the rebellion, and most of them knew, what was a fact, that the English Government only a few years earlier had seriously considered proposals for colonising New South Wales with American loyalists, who would have, in their opinion, made better settlers than convicts. And it is probable that if the crowded state of the English gaols and prison hulks had not forced the Government into quickly finding penal settlements for their prisoners, the plan would have been carried out.

When his Majesty's ship *Guardian*, under the command of Nelson's "brave captain, Riou," was wrecked off the Cape of Good Hope, and her cargo of stores, badly needed by the starving colonists of New South Wales, were lying at Cape Town without means of transport, an American merchant skipper saw his chance and offered to convey them to Sydney Cove. But the English officers, although they knew that the colony was starving, were afraid to take the

responsibility of chartering a "foreign" ship. Lieutenant King—afterwards to become famous in Australian history—wrote to the almost heart-broken and expectant Governor Phillip from the Cape as follows: "There is here a Whitehaven man who, on his own head, intends going immediately to America and carrying out two vessels, one of 100 or 120 tons—a Marble Head schooner—and the other a brig of 150 tons, both of which he means to load with salt beaf and pork which he can afford to sell in the colony at 7d. a pound. He wished encouragement from me, but anything of that kind being out of my power to give him, he has taken a decided part and means to run the risque. I mention this so that you may know what is meant."

This "risque," undertaken by the adventurous "Whitehaven man" was the genesis of the American trading and whaling industry in the Southern Seas, and American enterprise had much to do with the development of the infant colony of New South Wales, inasmuch as American ships not only brought cargoes of food to the starving colonists, but American whalemen showed the unskilled British seamen (in this respect) how to kill the sperm whale and make a profit of the pursuit of the leviathan of the Southern Seas.

In 1791 some returning convict transports, whose captains had provided themselves with

whaling gear, engaged in the whale fishing in the South Pacific on their way home to England. Whales in plenty were seen, but the men who manned the boats were not the right sort of men to kill them—they knew nothing of sperm-whaling, although some of them had had experience of right whaling in the Arctic Seas—a very different and tame business indeed to the capture of the mighty cachalot. Consequently, they were not very successful, but the Enderby Brothers, a firm of London shipowners, were not to be easily discouraged, and they sent out vessel after vessel, taking care to engage some skilled American whalemen for each ship. Sealing parties were formed and landed upon islands in Bass's Straits, and regular whaling and sealing stations were formed at several points on the Australian coast, and by 1797 the whale fishing had become of such importance that a minute was issued by the Board of Trade, dated December 26th, setting forth that the merchant adventurers of the southern whale fishery had memoralised the Board to the effect that the restrictions of the East India company and the war with Spain prevented the said whalers from successfully carrying on their business, and that the Board had requested the East India Company, while protecting its own trading rights, to do something towards admitting other people to trade. The effect of the Board's minute—

worded of course in much more "high falutin" language as should be the case when a mere Board of Trade addressed such a high and mighty corporation as the Honourable East India Company—was that directors permitted whaling to be carried on at Kerguelen's Land (in the Indian Ocean), off the coasts of New Holland, the New Hebrides, New Caledonia, New Zealand, the Philippines and Formosa, but they restrained trading further north than the Equator and further east than 51° of east longitude, and that restraint remained for a long time to come.

For the Spanish war trouble the whalers took another remedy: they obtained letters of marque and pretty soon added successful privateering to their whaling ventures, and the Spaniards on the coast of Peru and on the Spanish Pacific Islands before a year had passed found that an English whaler was a vessel armed with other weapons besides harpoons and lances, and was a good ship to keep clear of.

By this time the Americans were taking a share in the whaling and sealing industries—rather more than their share the Englishmen thought, for in 1804 Governor King issued a proclamation which sets forth that: "Whereas it has been represented to me that the commanders of some American vessels have, without any permission or authority whatever, not only greatly incommoded

his Majesty's subjects in resorting to and continuing among the different islands in Bass's Straits for skins and oil, but have also in violation of the law of nations and in contempt of the local regulations of this Territory and its dependencies, proceeded to build vessels on these islands and in other places . . . to the prejudice and infringements of his Majesty's rights and properties thereon," he (King) had, while waiting for instructions from England, decided to prevent any foreigner whatever from building vessels whose length of keel exceeded 14 feet, except, of course, such vessel was built in consequence of shipwreck by distressed seamen. There was nothing unreasonable in this prohibition, as the whole territory being a penal settlement, one of the Royal instructions for its government was that no person should be allowed to build vessels without the express permission of the Governor, so the Americans were only asked to obey the existing law. The proclamation ended with a clause ordering that all vessels coming from the State of New York should do fourteen days quarantine in consequence of the plague having broken out there.

Just about this time news reached Sydney that the crew of an American sealer lying in Kent's Bay among Cape Barren Islands (Bass's Straits) were building a schooner from the wreck of an East Indiaman named the *Sydney Cove*—a ship

famous in Australian sea story. King despatched an officer to the spot with orders to "command the master to desist from building any vessel whatever, and should he refuse to comply, you will immediately cause the King's mark to be put on some of the timbers, and forbid him and his people from prosecuting the work, and also forbid the erection of any habitation on any part of the coast . . . taking care not to suffer any or the least act of hostility, or losing sight of the attention due to the subjects of the United States," &c.

Writing to England on this matter, King says: "This is the third American vessel that has within the last twelve months been in the Straits and among the islands, procuring seal skins and oils for the China market." In the same letter he tells how the loss of the ships *Cato* and *Porpoise* on Wreck Reef had led to the discovery of *beche-de-mer*, which could then be sold in Canton for £50 a ton; this find was another reason for keeping foreigners out of Australian waters.

As no more is heard of the schooner building in Bass's Straits, we may assume that the Americans quietly obeyed the laws and desisted; but there were soon more causes of trouble.

In March, 1805, a general order set forth that American ships, after receiving assistance and relief at Sydney Cove, were continually returning this hospitality by secreting on board and carrying off

runaway convicts, and so it was ordered that every English or foreign vessel entering the ports of the settlement should give security for themselves in £500, and two freeholders in the sum of £50 each, not to carry off any person without the Governor's certificate that such person was free to go. This order had some effect in putting a stop to the practice, but not a few persons managed to leave the colony and reach American shores without there being evidence enough to show how they got away. Muir, one of the "Scotch Martyrs," escaped in the American Ship *Otter* as far back as 1795; and although his story has been told before in detail, we may here briefly mention that the *Otter* was hired expressly to affect his escape. Muir got on board safely enough, and the ship sailed, but was wrecked off the west coast of America. After sufferings and privations enough to satisfy even the sternest justice, Muir managed to reach Mexico, and embarked in a Spanish frigate for Europe. The vessel was taken by an English man-of-war after a sharp engagement, in which Muir was severely wounded. His identity was concealed from the English commander, and he managed to reach Paris, only to die of his wound.

In October, 1804, there was serious trouble in Bass's Straits between English and American sealers. Messrs. Kable and Underwood, Sydney shipowners, had a sealing establishment in Kent's

Bay, and among the men employed were some "assigned" convicts. One Joseph Murrell, master of the sealing schooner *Endeavour*, wrote to his owners a letter in which he stated he was too ill to write coherently, in consequence of the usage he had received from one Delano, master of the American schooner *Pilgrim*. Delano's name was familiar to Governor King, inasmuch as he had taken a part in the 1803 attempt to colonise Port Philip, as follows: One of the officers, Lieutenant Bowen, on his way across Bass's Straits in a small boat, had the misfortune to carry away his rudder, and when in danger was rescued by Delano. Bowen, anxious to deliver some despatches, hired the *Pilgrim's* tender from Delano to carry them, omitting to make a bargain beforehand; and for this paltry service the American charged £400! The British Government growled, but paid.

But let Captain Murrell tell his story: "At four in the morning on the 17th I was suddenly seized by the chief mate [of the *Pilgrim*] and three other American ruffians" (they were really Chilenos), "two of whom caught me by the hair, the other two by the arms. They dragged me out of bed and trailed me in this fashion along the ground till they came to the sea beach. Here they beat me with clubs, then kept me three-quarters of an hour naked whilst they were searching for the rest of my people." Murrell

goes on to detail as to how he threatened them with the wrath of the Governor, to which they replied that the Governor was not there to protect him. He was then taken to a tree and lashed to it, stripped, and all the Americans took a hand in flogging him into insensibility. When he recovered, he says, he asked for death rather than torture, and was answered savagely that he and his men were the means of depriving the Americans of 3,000 dollars' worth of skins by their operations, and that Englishmen had better keep away from Cape Barren and leave the field open to Americans.

"Then," he wrote, "they began to sport away with their bloody cruelties, until some few Englishmen belonging to other [sealing] gangs out of Port Jackson, stung to the quick to see the cruelties exercised upon me without humanity, law, or justice, determined not to suffer it, and began to assemble. This occasioned the Americans to face about, at which instant I got my hands loose and ran into the sea, determined to be drowned rather than be tortured to death. I was followed by a number of Americans to the seaside, who stoned me, and sent into the water after me a Sandwich Island savage, who gave me desperate blows with a club. I put up my arm to save my head and he broke my arm in three places. I was then dragged on shore and left lying on the beach, the men

remarking that they supposed I had had enough, but that there were more of their country's ships expected, who would not let me off so lightly. Then they took away some of my people, rescuing from my custody a King's prisoner."

In all a dozen men—convicts and others—were taken away by Delano and his ruffianly crowd of Chilenos and Portuguese, and this particular sealing station was practically destroyed.

Captain Moody, of the colonial schooner *Governor King*, had recorded a similar instance a few months earlier, and there is no doubt that the colonials had just cause for complaint; as there is equally no doubt that they themselves were not altogether innocent of provocation. Nothing, however, came of these quarrels, for although the Governor wrote to England on the matter, the authorities "remembered to forget" to answer, and the rival sealing parties continued to fight without bringing about a serious battle, and the whaling and sealing industry continued to grow in such fashion as is here indicated. What it had become little more than a generation later is shown in the remainder of this article, mentioning incidentally that an American whaler, the *Topaz*, Captain Folger, was the first discoverer of the descendants of the *Bounty* mutineers on Pitcairn Island in 1808; and that Wilkes' United States Exploring Expedition of 1836–42 was in a

large measure suggested to America by the great increase in that half of the century of American South Sea trade. What this increase was can best be told in the words of the man—Mr. Charles Enderby—who was unquestionably the highest authority and whose house founded this very industry in the Southern Ocean. In April, 1849, Charles Enderby received a charter of incorporation for a proposed southern whale fishery, together with a grant of the Auckland Islands (but that is another story), and to celebrate the occasion a banquet was held at the London Tavern, Bishopsgate Street, London, presided over by the senior naval Lord of the Admiralty, who proposed the health of the guest of the evening, Charles Enderby. In replying to that toast Mr. Enderby quoted the whalemen's shipping list, in which it was shown that in March, 1849, "the United States, whose flag was to be found on every sea, had 596 whaleships of 190,000 tons, and manned by 18,000 seamen, while the number of English ships engaged in the whale trade was only fourteen!"

During the next decade the English did something to improve this state of affairs, but their endeavour was made too late, and by the time they woke up to the situation the heyday of South Sea whaling was gone.

We are so accustomed to take it for granted that the English (the original brand thereof, not

the American pattern) were fifty years ago in command of all sea commerce, that the old-fashioned English sailor was superior to all others, and that his ships beat every one else's in everything appertaining to the sea, that this fact of how thoroughly the Americans beat us in the great whaling industry is never remembered. And whaling was and is now a branch of sea service that needs *men* to successfully work in it, for it cannot be profitably pursued with the human paint-scrubbers who to-day make up such a large section of our mercantile marine; and the success of the American whaling seamen may supply a clue to the Nelson-like fashion in which American men-of-warsmen tackle the serious business of the American Navy.

The Brass Gun of the Buccaneers

CHALLONER was a trader at Jakoits Harbour in Ponapé, one of the loveliest of the great Caroline Archipelago in the North Pacific. He was a quiet but determined-looking man of fifty, and at the time of this story had been living on Ponapé for over five years. Unlike the generality of the white men who were settled on the island, he never carried arms and never entered into any of the disputes that too often occurred among them and ended in bloodshed.

Many of his neighbours were scoundrels and ruffians of the deepest dye—deserters from whale-ships and men-of-war, or escaped criminals from California and the Australian colonies. Some of these earned a living by trading with the natives for turtle-shell and cocoanut oil, others were simply beachcombers, who attached themselves to the leading chiefs and gave their services to them in war time, receiving in return houses and land, and

spending their lives in time of peace in the wildest dissipation and excesses.

In those days the American whaling fleet made Jakoits and the other three harbours on the beautiful island their rendezvous before sailing northward to the coasts of Japan and Siberia. Sometimes there would be as many as thirty ships arrive within a week of each other, carrying from thirty to forty hands each; and these, when given liberty by their captains, at once associated with the beachcombing element, and turned an island paradise into a hell during their stay on shore.

There was among these beachcombers a man named Larmer. He was of Herculean stature and strength, and was, in a manner, their leader. It was his habit in his drunken moments to vaunt of the bloody deeds which he had perpetrated during his crime-stained career in the Pacific Islands. For the lives of natives he had absolutely no regard, and had committed so many murders in the Gilbert Islands that he had been forcibly taken on board a whaler by the few white men living there, and threatened with instant death if he returned.

The whaleship landed him on Ponapé, and his presence soon became a curse. Being possessed of plenty of arms and ammunition, he soon gained the friendship of a native chief ruling over the western district of the island, and his savage nature at once showed itself by his offering to destroy the inhabi-

tants of a little island named Pàkin, who had in some way offended this chief. His offer was accepted, and, accompanied by five ruffianly whites and some hundreds of natives, the unfortunate people were surprised and butchered. Elated with this achievement, Larmer returned to Ponapé, and, during the orgy which took place to celebrate the massacre, he shot dead one of his white companions who had displeased him over some trifling matter.

The news was brought by a native to Challoner, who with a fellow-trader and several local chiefs was sitting outside his house smoking and enjoying the cool of the evening, and watching the flashing torches of a number of canoes catching flying fish beyond the barrier reef. Neither of them felt surprised, and Challoner remarked to the native that it was good to know that one bad and useless man was dead, but that it would be better still to hear that the man who slaughtered a whole community in cold blood was dead also.

"I wouldn't have said that if I were you," said Dawson, the other trader, nervously; "that fellow Larmer is bound to hear of it."

"I am quite prepared," Challoner replied quietly, "as you know, Dawson. Things cannot go on like this. I have never killed a man in my life, but to kill such a brute as Larmer would be a good action."

The distance between Challoner's place and Kiti,

where Larmer dwelt with his villainous associates, was but ten miles. Yet, although Larmer had now been living on the island for a year, Challoner had only once met and spoken to him.

* * * * *

During a visit which he (Challoner) had made to a little harbour called Metalanim, he had explored some very ancient ruins there, which were generally believed by the white uneducated traders to have been constructed by the old buccaneers, though the most learned antiquarians confess themselves puzzled to solve the mystery of their existence. But that these ruins had been used as a *depôt* or refuge of some sort by those who sailed the North Pacific more than two hundred years ago was evident, for many traces of their occupancy by Europeans had been found by the few white men who had visited them.

It was Challoner's fortune to discover amid the mass of tangled vines and creepers that grew all over the walls, and even down in the curious chambers, an old brass cannon. With the aid of some of his native friends he succeeded in dragging it forth and conveying it in his boat to his house, where, upon cleaning it, he found it bore the Spanish arms over the date of its casting in Manila, in the year 1716. Much interested in this, he refused to sell the gun to several whaleship captains, who each wanted to buy it. He would

sell it, he thought, to better advantage by sending it to Australia or Europe.

Soon after its discovery he had set his people to work to clean and polish it. One day he saw coming towards him a man, who from his huge figure he knew must be Larmer, the beachcomber.

"I say, boss," said the man roughly, "let's have a look at that cannon you've found, will yar?"

"There it is," said Challoner quietly, pointing to his boat-house, but not deigning to accompany the beachcomber and show him the weapon.

Larmer made a brief but keen inspection, and then walked into the trader's room and, unasked, sat down.

"It's as good as new," he said. "What do you want for it?"

"I will not sell it," replied the trader coldly, eyeing the beachcomber steadily, "at least to no one in Ponapé. There is too free a display of and use of arms here as it is," and he looked pointedly at the brace of heavy Colt's revolvers in his visitor's belt.

A scowl darkened Larmer's face. "I'll give you a hundred dollars for the thing," he said. "I want it, and I mean to have it." And he rose and dashed his huge hand down upon the table.

Challoner was unarmed, but his face betrayed neither fear nor any other emotion. He was standing with his back to the doorway of his

bedroom. A thick curtain of navy blue calico concealed the interior of this room from the view of any one in the living room, and Larmer had seen no one but the trader about.

For some few seconds there was silence; the beachcomber, with his clenched fist still on the table, was trying to discover whether the man before him was intimidated. Challoner stood unmoved.

"Yes," began Larmer again, "I want that cannon. Sru, the chief of Kiti, an' me is going on a little war-party again. But I'll pay you for it."

"And I tell you that I won't sell it. Least of all to a man like you, who would use it for murder."

The beachcomber's hand went to his belt—and stayed there, as the trader stepped aside from the doorway and he saw a rifle pointed at his heart. It was held by the trader's wife.

"Put up your hands," said Challoner, with a contemptuous laugh. "And now listen to me. I want no quarrel with you—don't force one on me. Now clear out."

Without a word the baffled man turned away. But the look of savage hatred that gleamed in his fierce eyes told Challoner that he had made a dangerous enemy. And only a few days passed before he heard from the natives that Larmer said he would have his revenge—and the brass gun as well—before many months were over.

But the trader, though apparently taking no heed, was yet watchful. His influence with the natives of the Jakoits district was great, for they both liked and trusted him as a just and honourable man, and he knew that they would rally round him if Larmer attempted either to carry off the gun or do harm to him.

For some months matters went on at Jakoits very quietly, and the last of the whaling fleet having sailed, Challoner and Dawson went about their usual work again, such as trading along the coast in their whaleboats and storing their cocoanut oil in readiness for the *Mocassin*, the trading ship which visited them once a year, and was now due.

Although living only a few miles apart from each other, the two did not very often meet, but Challoner was one day surprised to see Dawson's boat pulling into the beach, for he had had a visit from his friend only the previous evening. The moment the boat touched the sand Dawson jumped out, and Challoner at once saw by the anxious expression on his face that something was wrong.

He soon learnt Dawson's news, which was bad enough. The *Mocassin* had run ashore in the night at a place five miles away from Dawson's village, and it was feared she would become a total wreck unless she could be lightened and floated over the reef into smooth water. The captain had sent an urgent message for aid, and in less than half an

hour the two men were on their way to the wreck, accompanied by nearly every male native in Challoner's village.

Towards sunset on the following day, just as the boats were in sight, returning from the wreck, Tiaru, the trader's wife, with her one child and some of her female relatives, were coming from their bathe in the sea, when they heard screams from the village, and presently some terrified women fled past them, calling out that Larmer and another white man and a number of their native allies were carrying away the brass gun. In an instant the young wife gave the babe to a woman near her, and darted towards her husband's house. A number of women and children, encouraged by her presence, ran to alarm the approaching boats.

In front of the trader's house Larmer and another beachcomber were directing a score of Kiti natives how to sling the heavy gun between two stout poles. A sentry stood on guard at the gate of Challoner's fence, but Tiaru dashed his crossed musket aside, and then sprang into the midst of her husband's enemies.

"Set down the gun," she panted indignantly, "ye coward men of Róan Kiti, and ye white men thieves, who only dare to come and steal when there are but women to meet and fight with thee."

Larmer laughed.

"Get out o' this, you meddling fool," he said in

English, and then, calling to the natives to hasten ere it grew dark, he took no further notice of the woman before him. Then, as they prepared to raise their burden by a united effort upon their naked shoulders, Tiaru sprang into the house and quickly reappeared with a heavy knife in her hand. Twisting her lithe body from the grasp of one of the beachcombers, with flaming eyes she burst in amongst the gun carriers and began slashing at the strips of green bark with which the cannon was lashed to the poles.

"Curse you!" said Larmer fiercely, striding forward and seizing her by her long hair. "Take away her knife, Watty, quick!" And he dragged her head back with brutal strength—to release his hold with a cry of savage fury as the woman turned upon him and with a swift stroke severed the fingers of his left hand. Again she raised her hand as Larmer drew a pistol and shot her through the body. She fell without a cry upon the gun beneath.

"By ——, you've done it now!" said the man Watty. "Look there! There's all our natives running away. We're as good as dead men if we stay here five minutes longer. I'm off, anyway"; and then, hurriedly binding up his companion's bleeding hand, he disappeared into the surrounding forest after his native allies.

For a few moments Larmer stood irresolute,

looking first at the body of the woman lying across the gun, then at his wounded hand. Already the shouts of Challoner's natives sounded near, and he knew that the boats had reached the beach. The gun, which had cost him so dear, must be abandoned, but he would take a further revenge upon its owner. He ran quickly to a fire which burned dimly in Challoner's cooking-house, lit a bunch of dried palm leaves, and thrust it into the thatch of the dwelling-house. Then he struck into the jungle.

As Challoner, followed by Dawson and the men of Jakoits village, rushed along the narrow path that led to his house, they heard the roar and crackle of the flames; when they gained the open they saw the bright light shining on the old cannon, whose polished brass was stained and streaked with red. Tiaru lay across the breech, dead.

* * * * *

For nearly two days Challoner and his natives followed the tracks of the murderer into the heart of the mountain forest of Ponapé. Dawson and another party had left early the same night for the Róan Kiti coast, where they landed and formed a cordon, which it would be impossible for Larmer to pass.

Watty, his fellow-scoundrel, was captured early next morning. He had lost his way and was lying asleep beside a fire on the banks of a small stream.

He was promptly shot by Dawson. Larmer was to be taken alive.

Meanwhile Challoner and his men pressed steadily on, driving their prey before them. At noon on the second day they caught sight of his huge figure ascending a rocky spur, and a party of natives ran swiftly to its base and hid at the margin of a small, deep pool. Challoner knew that his man wanted a drink, and would soon descend the spur to get it.

For some hours not a sound broke the silence, then a stone rolled down, and presently Larmer's head appeared above a boulder. He looked carefully round, and then, finding all quiet, began the descent. On the very edge of the pool he again stopped and listened, holding his pistol at full cock. His left hand was slung to his chest by a piece of green hibiscus bark, which was passed round his neck and roughly tied.

The silence all around him was reassuring, but he still held out the pistol as he bent his knees to drink. Ere his lips could touch the water two half-naked figures sprang upon him and bore him down. He was too weak to resist.

"Do not bind him," said Challoner, "but tie his right hand behind his back."

Larmer turned his bloodshot eyes upon the trader, but said nothing.

"Give him a drink."

A native placed a gourd of water to his lips. He drank greedily. Then, in silence, Challoner and his men began their march back.

* * * * *

At sunset the people of Jakoits gathered together in front of the blackened space whereon the trader's house had stood. Raised on four heavy blocks of stone was the still blood-stained cannon, and bound with his back to its muzzle was Larmer.

Challoner made a sign, the brown-skinned men and women moved quickly apart in two parties, one on each side of the gun. Then Rul, the chief of the Jakoits' village, advanced with a lighted stick, touched the priming, and sprang aside. A sheet of flame leaped out, a bursting roar pealed through the leafy forest aisles, and Challoner had avenged his murdered wife.

Susāni

A FEW weeks ago I was reading a charmingly written book by a lady (the wife of a distinguished savant) who had spent three months on Funāfuti, one of the lagoon islands of the Ellice Group. Now the place and the brown people of whom she wrote were once very familiar to me, and her warm and generous sympathy for a dying race stirred me greatly, and when I came across the name "Funāfāla," old, forgotten memories awoke once more, and I heard the sough of the trade wind through the palms and the lapping of the lagoon waters upon the lonely beaches of Funāfāla, as Senior, the mate of the *Venus*, and myself watched the last sleep of Susāni.

Funāfāla is one of the many islands which encircle Funāfuti lagoon with a belt of living green, and to Funāfāla—"the island of the pandanus palm"—Senior and I had come with a party of natives from the village on the main island to

spend a week's idleness. Fifty years ago, long before the first missionary ship sailed into the lagoon, five or six hundred people dwelt on Funāfāla in peace and plenty—now it holds but their bones, for they were doomed to fade and vanish before the breath of the white man and his civilisation and "benefits," which to the brown people mean death, and as the years went by, the remnant of the people on Funāfāla and the other islets betook themselves to the main island—after which the lagoon is named—for there the whale-ships and trading schooners came to anchor, and there they live to this day, smitten with disease and fated to disappear altogether within another thirty years, and be no more known to man except in the dry pages of a book written by some learned ethnologist.

But twice every year the people of Funāfuti betake themselves to Funāfāla to gather the cocoa-nuts, which in the silent groves ripen and fall and lie undisturbed from month to month; then for a week or ten days, as the men husk the nuts, the women and children fish in the daytime among the pools and runnels of the inner reef, and at night with flaring torches of palm-leaf they stand amid the sweeping surf on the outer side of the narrow islet, and with net and spear fill their baskets with blue and yellow crayfish. Then when all the work is done, the canoes are filled with

the husked cocoanuts, and with laughter and song —for they are yet a merry-hearted though vanishing people—they return to the village, and for another six months Funāfāla is left to the ceaseless call of the restless sea upon the outer reef, and the hoarse cry of the soaring frigate birds.

One afternoon Senior and myself, accompanied by a young, powerfully-built native named Suka, were returning to the temporary village on Funāfāla—a collection of rude huts thatched with palm leaves—from a fishing excursion on the outer reef, when we were overtaken by a series of sudden squalls and downpours of rain. We were then walking along the weather shore of the island, which was strewn with loose slabs of coral stone, pure white in colour and giving forth a clear, resonant sound to the slightest disturbing movement. On our right hand was a scrub of *puka* trees, which afforded no shelter from the torrential rain; on our left the ocean, whose huge, leaping billows crashed and thundered upon the black, shelving reef, and sent swirling waves of whitened foam up to our feet.

For some minutes we continued to force our way against the storm, when Suka, who was leading, called out to us that a little distance on along the beach there was a cluster of *pāpā* (coral rocks), in the recesses of which we could obtain

shelter. Even as he spoke the rain ceased for a space, and we saw, some hundreds of yards before us, the spot of which he had spoken—a number of jagged, tumbled-together coral boulders which some violent convulsion of the sea had torn away from the barrier reef and hurled upon the shore, where, in the course of years, kindly Nature had sent out a tender hand and covered them with a thick growth of a creeper peculiar to the low-lying atolls of the mid-Pacific, and hidden their rugged outlines under a mantle of vivid green.

As we drew near, the bright, tropic sun shone out for a while, and the furious wind died away, seeming to gather fresh strength for another sweeping onslaught from the darkened weather horizon.

"Quick," said Suka, pointing to the rocks, "'tis bad to be smitten with such rain as this. Let us rest in the *pāpā* till the storm be over."

Following our all but naked guide, who sprang from stone to stone with the surefootedness of a mountain goat, we soon reached the cluster of rocks, the bases of which were embedded in the now hard and stiffened sand, and almost at the same moment another heavy rain squall swept down and blurred sea and sky and land alike.

Bidding us to follow, Suka began to clamber up the side of the highest of the boulders, on the seaward face of which, he said, was a small cave, used

in the olden days as a sleeping place by fishermen and sea-bird catchers. Suddenly, when half-way up, he stopped and turned to us, and with a smile on his face, held up his hand and bade us listen. Some one was singing.

"It is Susāni," he whispered, "she did not sleep in the village last night. She comes to this place sometimes to sing to the sea. Come, she is not afraid of white men."

Grasping the thick masses of green vine called *Aťat* which hung from the summit of the rock, we at last reached the foot of the cave, and looking up we saw seated at the entrance a young native girl of about twelve years of age. Even though we were so near to her she seemed utterly unconscious of our presence, and still sang in a low, soft voice some island chant, the words of which were strange to both my companion and myself although we were well acquainted with nearly all the Tokelauan dialects.

Very quietly we stood awaiting till she turned her face towards us, but her eyes were bent seaward upon the driving sheets of rain, and the tumbling surf which thrashed upon the shore.

"Wait," said Suka in a low voice; "she will see us soon. 'Tis best not to disturb her. She is afflicted of God and seeth many things."

Her song ceased, and then Suka, stepping forward, touched her gently upon the arm. She looked

up and smiled into his face, and then she let her full, dark eyes rest upon the strangers who stood behind, then again she turned to Suka in mute, inquiring wonder.

He bent down and placed his cheek against hers, "Be not afraid, Susāni; they be good friends. And see, little one, sit thee further back within the cave, for the driving rain beats in here at the mouth and thy feet are wet and cold."

She rose without a word and stood whilst the kindly-hearted native unrolled an old mat which lay at the end of the cave and spread it out in the centre.

"Come, Susāni, dear one," he said gravely, and his usually harsh and guttural voice sounded soft and tender. "Come, sit thee here, and then in a little while shall I get wood and make a fire so that we may eat. Hast eaten to-day, little one?"

She shook her head; a faint smile parted her lips, and then her strange, mournful eyes for a moment again sought ours as she seated herself on the mat. Suka beckoned us to approach and sit near her, himself sitting a little apart and to one side.

"Susāni," he said, bending forward and speaking slowly and carefully, "*fealofani tau lima i taka soa*" ("give your hand to my friends").

The girl held out her left hand, and Senior and

I each took it in turn gently within our own, and uttered the native greeting of "*Fakaalofa.*"

"She can talk," said Suka, "but not much. Sometimes for many days no word will come from her lips. It is then she leaveth the village and walks about in the forest or along the beaches when others sleep. But no harm can come to her, for she is *tausi mau te Atua.*[1] And be not vexed in that she gave thee her left hand, for, see——"

He touched the girl's right arm, and we now saw that it hung limp and helpless upon her smooth, bared thigh.

"Was she born thus?" asked Senior, as he placed his strong, rough hand upon her head and stroked her thick, wavy hair, which fell like a mantle over her shoulders and back.

"Nay, she was born a strong child, and her mother and father were without blemish, and good to look upon—the man was as thick as me" (he touched his own brawny chest), "but as she grew and began to talk, the bone in her right arm began to perish. And then the hand of God fell upon her mother and father, and they died. But let me go get wood and broil some fish, for she hath not eaten." Then he bent forward and said—

"Dost fear to stay here, Susāni, with the white men?"

She looked at us in turn, and then said slowly—

[1] In God's special keeping.

"Nay, I have no fear, Suka."

"Poor little beggar!" said Senior pityingly.

Ten minutes later Suka had returned with an armful of dry wood and some young drinking cocoanuts. Fish we had in plenty, and in our bags were some biscuits, brought from the schooner. As Senior and I tended the fire, Suka wrapped four silvery sea mullet in leaves, and then when it had burnt down to a heap of glowing coals he laid them in the centre and watched them carefully, speaking every now and then to the child, who seemed scarcely to heed, as she gazed at Senior's long, yellow beard, and his bright, blue eyes set in his honest, sun-tanned face. Then, when the fish were cooked, Suka turned them out of their coverings and placed them on broad, freshly plucked *puka* leaves, and Senior brought the hard ship biscuits, and, putting one beside a fish, brought it to the child and bade her eat.

She put out her left hand timidly, and took it from him, her strange eyes still fixed wonderingly upon his face. Then she looked at Suka, and Suka, with an apologetic cough, placed one hand over his eyes and bent his head—for he was a deacon, and to eat food without giving thanks would be a terrible thing to do, at least in the presence of white men, who, of course, never neglected to do so.

The child, hungry as she must have been, ate

her food with a dainty grace, though she had but one hand to use, and our little attentions to her every now and then seemed at first to increase her natural shyness and timidity. But when the rude meal was finished, and my companion and myself filled our pipes and sat in the front of the cave, she came with Suka and nestled up against his burly figure as he rolled a cigarette of strong, black tobacco in dried banana leaf. The rain had ceased, but the fronds of the coco-palms along the lonely shore swayed and beat together with the wind, which still blew strongly, though the sun was now shining brightly upon the white horses of the heaving sea.

For nearly half an hour we sat thus, watching the roll and curl of the tumbling seas upon the reef and the swift flight of a flock of savage-eyed frigate birds which swept to and fro, now high in air, now low down, with wing touching wave, in search of their prey, and listening to the song of the wind among the trees. Then Suka, without speaking, smiled, and pointed to the girl. She had pillowed her head upon his naked bosom and closed her long-lashed eyes in slumber.

"She will sleep long," he said. "Will it vex thee if I stay here with her till she awakens? See, the sky is clear and the rain hath ceased, and ye need but walk along the beach till——"

"We will wait, Suka," I answered; "we will

wait till she awakens, and then return to the village together. How comes it that one so young and tender is left to wander about alone?"

Suka pressed his lips to the forehead of the sleeping girl. "No harm can come to her. God hath afflicted, but yet doth He protect her. And she walketh with Him and His Son Christ, else had she perished long ago, for sometimes she will leave us and wander for many days in the forest or along the shore, eating but little and drinking nothing, for she cannot open a cocoanut with her one hand, and there are no streams of fresh, sweet water here as there be in the fair land of Samoa. And yet God is with her always, always, and she feeleth hunger and thirst but little."

Senior placed his hand on mine and gripped it so firmly that I looked at him with astonishment. He was a cold, self-contained man, making no friends, never talking about himself, doing his duty as mate of the *Venus* as a seaman should do it, and never giving any one—even myself, with whom he was more open than any other man—any encouragement to ask him why he, a highly educated and intelligent man, had left civilisation to waste his years as a wanderer in the South Seas. Still grasping my hand, he turned to me and spoke with quivering lips—

"'She walketh with God!' Did you hear that? Did you look into her eyes and not see in them

what fools would call insanity, and what I *know* is a knowledge of God above and Christ and the world beyond. 'God has afflicted her,' so this simple-minded native, whom many men in their unthinking moments would call a canting, naked kanaka, says; but God has *not* afflicted her. He has blessed her, for in her eyes there is that which tells me better than all the deadly-dull sermons of the highly cultured and fashionable cleric, who patters about the Higher Life, or the ranting Salvationist who bawls in the streets of Melbourne or Sydney about the Blood of the Lamb, that there *is* peace beyond for all. . . . 'God has afflicted this poor child!' Would that He might so afflict me physically as He has afflicted her—if He but gave me that inner knowledge of Himself which so shines out and is glorified in her face."

His voice, rising in his excitement, nearly awakened her; so Suka, with outstretched hand, enjoined silence.

"She sleeps, dear friends."

A year had come and gone, and the *Venus* again lay at anchor in the broad lagoon of Funāfuti. Suka had come aboard whilst the schooner was beating up to the anchorage, and said that there had been much sickness on the island, that many people had died, and that Susāni with other

children was *tali mate* (nearly dead). Could we give them some medicine? for it was a strong sickness this, and even the "thick"[1] man or woman withered and died from it. Soon they would all be dead.

Alas! we could not help them much, for our medicine chest was long since depleted of the only drug that would have been of service. At every island in the group from Nanomea southwards we had found many of the people suffering and dying from a malignant type of fever introduced by an Hawaiian labour vessel. Then an additional misfortune followed—a heavy gale, almost of hurricane force, had set in from the westward and destroyed countless thousands of cocoanut trees, so that with the exception of fish, food was very scarce.

We sent Suka on shore in the boat at once with a few mats of rice and bags of biscuit—all the provisions we could spare. Then as soon as the vessel was anchored the captain, Senior, and myself followed. The resident native teacher met us on the beach, his yellow face and gaunt frame showing that he, too, had been attacked. Many of the people, he told us, had gone to the temporary village on Funāfāla, where a little more food could be obtained than on the main island, the groves of palms there not having suffered so

[1] *I.e.*, strong, stout.

severely from the gale. Among those who had gone were Susāni and the family who had adopted her, and we heard with sorrow that there was no hope of the child living, for that morning some natives had arrived from Funāfāla with the news that nearly all the young children were dead, and those remaining were not expected to live beyond another day or two.

After spending an hour with the teacher, and watching him distribute the rice and biscuit among his sick and starving people, we returned to the ship with the intention of sailing down to Funāfāla in the boat and taking the natives there some provisions. The teacher thanked us warmly, but declined to come with us, saying that he could not leave the many for the few, "for," he added sadly, "who will read the service over those who die? As you sail down the lagoon you will meet canoes coming up from Funāfāla bringing the dead. I cannot go there to bury them."

It was nearly midnight when we put off from the schooner's side, but with Suka as pilot we ran quickly down to the island. A few natives met us as we stepped on shore, and to these we gave the provisions we had brought, telling them to divide them equally. Then with Suka leading, and carrying a lighted torch made from the spathe of the cocoanut tree, we made our way through the darkened forest to the house in which Susāni and

her people were living. It was situated on the verge of the shore, on the weather side of the narrow island, so as to be exposed to the cooling breath of the trade wind, and consisted merely of a roof of thatch with open sides, and the ground within covered with coarse mats, upon which we saw were lying three figures.

Making as little noise as possible Suka called out a name, and a man threw off his sleeping mat and came out; it was Susāni's adopted father.

"No," he said in his simple manner, in answer to our inquiries, "Susāni is not yet dead, but she will die at dawn when the tide is low. 'Tis now her last sleep."

Stepping very softly inside the house so as not to disturb her, we sat down to wait her awakening. Suka crouched near us, smoking his pipe in silence, and watching the sleeping girl to see if she moved.

Just as the weird cries of the tropic birds heralded the approach of dawn, the woman who lay beside Susāni rose and looked into her face. Then she bade us come nearer.

"She is awake."

The child knew us at once, even in that imperfect light, for the moment Senior and myself stood up she tried to raise herself into a sitting posture; in an instant Suka sprang to her aid and pillowed her head upon his knees; weak as she was, she put out her hand to us, and then let it lie

in the mate's broad palm, her deep, mysterious eyes resting upon his face with a strange look of happiness shining in them. Presently her lips moved, and we all bent over her to listen; it was but one word—

"*Fakaalofa!*" [1]

She never spoke again, but lay breathing softly, and as the sun shot blood red from the sea and showed the deathly pallor of her face, poor Suka gave way, and his stalwart bosom was shaken with the grief he tried in vain to suppress. Once more she raised her thin, weak hand as if she sought to touch his face; he took it tremblingly and placed it against his cheek; in another moment she had ceased to breathe.

As I walked slowly along the beach to the boat I looked back; the White Man and the Brown were kneeling together over the little mat-shrouded figure.

[1] "My love to you."

The Brothers-in-Law: A tale of the Equatorial Islands

"THERE," said Tāvita the teacher, pointing with his paddle to a long, narrow peninsula which stretched out into the shallow waters of the lagoon, "there, that is the place where the battle was fought. In those days a village of thirty houses or more stood there; now no one liveth there, and only sometimes do the people come here to gather cocoanuts."

The White Man nodded. "'Tis a fair place to look upon. Let us land and rest awhile, for the sun is hot."

The native pastor swung the bow of the canoe round towards the shore, and presently the little craft glided gently upon the hard, white sand, and the two men got out, walked up to the grove of cocoa-palms, and sat down under their shade to rest and smoke until the sun lost some of its fierce intensity and they could proceed on their journey homeward to the principal village.

The White Man was the one trader living in Peru,[1] the native was a Samoan, and one of the oldest and bravest missionaries in the Pacific. For twenty years he had dwelt among the wild, intractable, and savage people of Peru—twenty years of almost daily peril, for in those days the warlike people of the Gilbert Group resented the coming of the few native teachers scattered throughout the archipelago, and only Tāvita's undaunted courage and genial disposition had preserved the lives of himself and his family. Such influence as he now possessed was due, not to his persistent attempts to preach Christianity, but to his reputation for integrity of conduct and his skill as a fisherman and carpenter.

The White Man and he were firm friends, and that day they had been down to the north end of the lagoon to collect a canoe load of the eggs of a small species of tern which frequented the uninhabited portion of the island in myriad swarms.

Presently, as they sat and smoked, and lazily watched a swarm of the silvery mullet called *kanae* disporting themselves on the glassy surface of the lagoon, the White Man said—

"Who were these white men, Tāvita, who fought in the battle?"

[1] Francis Island, or Peru, is one of the largest atolls of the Gilbert Group in the South Pacific, about one hundred and twenty miles south of the Equator

"Hast never heard the story?" inquired the teacher in Samoan.

The trader shook his head. "Only some of it—a little from one, a little from another."

"Then listen," said Tāvita, re-filling his pipe and leaning his broad back against the bole of a cocoa-palm.

* * * * *

"It was nineteen years ago, and I had been living on the island but a year. In those days there were many white men in these islands. Some were traders, some were but *papalagi tafea* [1] who spent their days in idleness, drunkenness, and debauchery, casting aside all pride and living like these savage people, with but a girdle of grass around their naked waists, their hands ever imbued in the blood of their fellow white men or that of the men of the land.

"Here, on this island, were two traders and many beachcombers. One of the traders was a man named Carter, the other was named West. Carter the people called 'Karta,' the other by his fore name, which was 'Simi' (Jim). They came here together in a whaleship from the Bonin Islands with their wives—two sisters, who were Portuguese half-castes, and both very beautiful women. Carter's wife had no children; West, who was the younger man, and who had married the younger

[1] Beachcombers.

sister, had two. Both brought many thousands of dollars worth of trade with them to buy cocoanut oil, for in those days these natives here did not make copra as they do now—they made oil from the nuts.

"Karta built a house on the north end of the island, where there is the best anchorage for ships, West chose to remain on the lee side where he had landed, and bought a house near to mine. In quite a few days we became friends, and almost every night we would meet and talk, and his children and mine played together. He was quite a young man, and had been, he told me, the third mate of an English ship which was cast away on the Bonin Islands four years before, where he had met Karta, who was a trader there, and whose wife's sister he married.

"One day they heard from the captain of a whaleship that there was much money to be made on this island of Peru, for although there were many beachcombers living here there was no trader to whom the people could sell their oil. So that was why they came here.

"Now, although these two men were married to two sisters, there was but little love between them, and then as time went on came distrust, and then hatred, born out of Karta's jealousy and wicked heart; but until they came to live here on Peru there had been no bad blood—not even

enough to cause a bitter word, though even then the younger man did not like Karta, who was a man of violent temper, unfaithful to his wife, and rude and insulting in his manner to most men, white or brown. And Serena, his wife, hated him, but made no sign.

"As time went on, both men prospered, for there was much oil to be had, and at the end of the first year a schooner came from Sydney and bought it. I went on board with Simi, after the oil had been rafted off to the ship's side. Karta, too, came on board to be paid for his oil. He had been drinking much grog and his face was flushed and angry. With him were three beachcombers whose foul language and insolent demeanour angered both the captain and Simi, who were quiet men. There were six or seven of these beachcombers living on the island, and they all disliked Simi, who would have none of their company; but in Karta's house they were made welcome. Night after night they would gather there and drink and gamble, for some of them had bags of dollars, for dissolute and idle as they were for the most of their time they could make money easily by acting as interpreters for the natives, to the captains of the whaleships, or as pilots to the trading vessels sailing northward to the Marshall Islands.

"The captain paid Simi partly in money and partly in trade goods, for the two hundred casks of

oil he bought, and then Simi and I turned to go on shore. Karta had scarce spoken ten words to Simi, who yet bore him no ill-will, although for many months tales had come to us of the evil life he led and the insults he put upon his wife Serena.

"But after he had bidden farewell to the captain, Simi held out his hand to his brother-in-law and said—'My wife Luisa sendeth love and greetings to Serena. Is she in good health?'

"Karta would not take the hand held out to him.

"'What is that to thee or thy wife either?' he answered rudely. 'Look to thy own business and meddle not with mine.'

"Simi's face grew red with anger, but he spoke quietly and reproved his brother-in-law for his rude speech. 'Why insult me needlessly before so many strangers?' he said. 'What harm have I or my wife Luisa ever done to thee?'

"'Curse thee and Luisa, thy wife,' said Karta again; 'she and thee, aye, and Serena too, are well matched, for ye be all cunning sneaks and fit company for that fat-faced Samoan psalm-singer who stands beside thee.'

"At these words the three beachcombers laughed, and when they saw that Simi made no answer, but turned aside from Karta in contempt, one of them called him a coward.

"He turned upon him quickly. 'Thou liest, thou drunken, useless cumberer of the earth,' he said,

looking at him scornfully ; 'no coward am I, nor a noisy boaster like thee. This is no place for us to quarrel. But say such a thing to me on the beach if ye dare.'

"'He is my friend,' said Karta, speaking with drunken rage, and thrusting his face into Simi's, 'he is as good a man as thee any day. To strike him or any one of us thou art afraid, thou cat-hearted coward and miser.'

"Simi clenched his hands, but suddenly thrust them into his pockets and looked at the captain and the officers of the ship.

"'This is no place for me,' he again said in a low voice ; 'come, Tāvita, let us go,' and without even raising his eyes to Karta and the three other men he went out of the cabin.

"That night he, Luisa, and I and my wife sat talking ; and in the fulness of her anger at the insults heaped upon her husband, Luisa told us of some things.

"'This man Karta hateth both my sister and myself, as well as my husband. He hateth me because that it was I whom he desired to marry, four years ago ; but I feared him too much to become his wife, for even in those days I knew him to be a drunkard and a gambler, and a licentious man. Then although she loved him not my sister Serena became his wife, for he was a man of good property, and promised to give over his evil

ways and be a good husband to her. And he hateth her and would gladly see her dead, for she hath borne him no children. He is for ever flinging cruel words at her, and hath said to her before me that a childless man is a thing of scorn and disgrace even to the savage people of this island. And he makes no secret of his wickedness with other women. That is why my sister Serena is dull and heavy-minded ; for she is eaten up with grief and shame.'

"'That is true,' said Simi, 'I have known this for a year past, for when he is drunk he cannot conceal his thoughts. And he is full of anger against me because I have nought in common with him. I am neither a drinker of grog nor a gambler, and have suffered from him what I would suffer from no other man. I am no brawler, but yet 'tis hard to bear.'

* * * * *

"Just as dawn came, and I was sunk in slumber, I heard a footstep outside my door, and then Simi called to me. 'Bring thy wife to my house quickly,' he said, 'evil work hath been done in the night.'

"My wife and I followed him, and when we entered we saw Luisa his wife kneeling beside a couch and weeping over Serena, who lay still and quiet as if dead.

"'Look,' he said sternly, 'look what that devil hath done!'

"He lifted Serena's left arm—the bone was broken in two places, above and below the elbow.

"We set to work quickly, and fitting the broken bones in place we bound her arm up in stiff, smooth strips of the spathe of the cocoanut tree, and then washed and dressed her feet, which were cut and bleeding, for she had walked barefooted, and clothed only in her night-dress, all the way from the north end of the island, which is nearly two leagues from my house.

"After she had drunk some coffee and eaten a little food she became stronger, and told us all that had befallen her.

"'Karta and the three other white men came back from the ship when it was long past midnight, and I knew by the noise they made that they had all been drinking grog. I heard them talking and laughing and saying that thou, Simi, were a paltry coward; and then one of them—he who is called Joe—said that he would one day end thee with a bullet and take Luisa to wife, as so fine a woman deserved a better man than a cur for a husband. And Karta—Karta my husband—laughed and said that that could not be, for he meant to take thee, Luisa, for himself when he had ridden himself of me. His shameless words stung me, and I wept silently as I lay there, and pressed my hands to my ears to shut out their foul talk and blasphemies.

"'Suddenly I heard my husband's voice as he rose from the table and came towards the sleeping room. He threw open the door and bade me come out and put food before him and his friends.

"'I rose at his bidding, for his face terrified me—it was the face of a devil—and began to clothe myself. He tore the dress from my hands and cursed me, and bade me go as I stood. In my fear I sprang to the window and tried to tear down the cane lattice-work so as to escape from the house and the shame he sought to put upon me. He seized me by the waist and tried to tear me away, but I was strong—strong with the strength of a man. Then it was that he went mad, for he took up a heavy *paua* stick and struck me twice on the arm. And had it not been that the other white men came in and dragged him away from me, crying shame on him, and throwing him down upon the floor, I would now be dead.

"'I lay quiet for a little time and then rising to my feet looked out into the big room, where the three men were still holding my husband down. One of them bade me run for my life, for Karta, he said, had gone mad with grog.

"'I feared to seek aid from any of the natives, for they, too, dread Karta at such times; so I walked and ran, sometimes along the beach, sometimes through the bush till I came here. That is all.'

* * * * *

"That morning the head man in our village caused the shell to sound,[1] to call the people together so that they might hear from Simi the story of the shame put upon his wife's sister and upon himself and his house. As the people gathered around the *moniep*,[2] and the head men sat down inside, the captain of the ship came on shore, and great was his anger when he heard the tale.

"'Let this poor woman come to my ship,' he said; 'her life here is not safe with such a man as that. For I know his utter vileness and cruelty to her. With me she shall be safe and well cared for, and if she so wishes she shall come with me to Fiji where my wife liveth, and her life will be a life of peace.'

"So Serena was put in the ship's boat, and Luisa went with her to remain on board till the ship sailed, which would be in three days. Then Simi and the head men talked together in the council house, and they made a law and sent a message to Karta. This was the message they sent to him: 'Because of the evil thou hast done and of the shame thou hast put upon the sister of the wife of our white man, come no more to this town. If thou comest then will there be war between thy town and ours, and we will burn the houses and harry and slay thee and the seven

[1] A conch-shell. [2] The council house.

other white men, and all men of thy town who side with thee, and make slaves of the women and children. This is our last word.'

"A swift messenger was sent. Before the sun was in mid-heaven he returned, crying out as he ran, 'War is the answer of Karta and his village. War and death to Simi and to us all are his words; and to Luisa, the wife of the white man, he sendeth this message: "Prepare a feast for thy new husband, for he cometh to take thee away from one who cannot stand against him."'

"In those days there were seven hundred fighting men in our town, and a great clamour arose. Spears and clubs and muskets and hatchets were seized, the armour of stout cinnet which covered a man from head to foot was put on, women filled baskets with smooth stones for the slings; and long before sundown the warriors set out, with Simi and the head men leading them, to meet their enemies mid-way—at this very place where we now sit. For this narrow strip of land hath been the fighting-ground of Peru from the old, old times long before I was born, and my years are three score and seven.

"The night was dark, but Simi and his people, when they reached this place, some by land and some in canoes, lit great fires on the beach and dug trenches in the sand very quickly, behind which all those who carried muskets were placed,

to fire into the enemy's canoes as they paddled along the narrow passage to the landing place. Karta and his white friends and the people of their town had more than two hundred muskets, whilst our village had less than fifty. But they were strong of heart and waited eagerly for the fight.

"Just before sunrise we saw them coming. There were over one hundred canoes, each carrying five or six men. Karta and the beachcombers were leading in a whaleboat, which was being rowed very swiftly. When within rifle-shot she grounded.

"As they leapt out of the boat, rifles in hand, they were followed by their natives, but our people fired a volley together, and two of the white men and many of their people fell dead in the shallow water. Then Simi and twenty of our best men leapt out of their trenches and dashed into the water to meet them. Karta was in advance of them all, and when he saw Simi he raised his rifle and fired. The bullet missed the white man but killed a native behind him. Then Karta, throwing away his rifle, took two pistols from his belt and shot twice at Simi who was now quite close to him. These bullets, too, did Simi no harm, for taking a steady aim at his foe he shot him through the body, and as Karta fell upon his side one of our people leapt on him and held his head under the water till there was no more life in his wicked heart.

"The fight was soon ended, for seeing three of their number killed so quickly, the rest of the white men ran back to their boat and tried to float her again; and then Simi, taking a shot-gun loaded with slugs from one of his men, ran up to them and shot dead the one named Joe. The other white men he let escape, for all their followers were now paddling off or swimming to the other side of the lagoon, and Simi was no lover of bloodshed.

"That day the people at the north end sent a message for peace, and peace was made, for our people had lost but one man killed, so the thing was ended well for us.

"Serena came back from the ship, for now that Karta was dead she had no fear. The three white men who were spared soon left Peru in a whale-ship, for they feared to remain.

"Simi and his wife and children and Serena did not long stay with us, for he sold his house and boats to a new trader who came to the island about a month after the fight, and they went away to live at a place in Fiji called Yasawa. They were very good to me and mine, and I was sore in my heart to see the ship sail away with them, and at night I felt very lonely for a long time, knowing that I should see them no more."

Pâkia

LATE one evening, when the native village was wrapped in slumber, Temana and I brought our sleeping-mats down to the boat-shed, and spread them upon the white, clinking sand. For here, out upon the open beach, we could feel a breath of the cooling sea-breeze, denied to the village houses by reason of the thick belt of palms which encompassed them on three sides. And then we were away from Malepa's baby, which was a good thing in itself.

Temana, tall, smooth-limbed, and brown-skinned, was an excellent savage, and mine own good friend. He and his wife Malepa lived with me as a sort of foster-father and mother, though their united ages did not reach mine by a year or two.

When Malepa's first baby was born, she and her youthful husband apologised sincerely for the offence against my comfort, and with many tears prepared to leave my service. But although I

was agreeable to let Malepa and her little bundle of red-skinned wrinkles go, I could not part with Temana, so I bade her stay. She promised not to let the baby cry o' nights. Poor soul. She tried her best; but every night—or rather towards daylight—that terrible infant would raise its fearsome voice, and wail like a foghorn in mortal agony.

We lit our pipes and lay back watching a moon of silvered steel poised 'midships in a cloudless sky. Before us, unbroken in its wide expanse, save for two miniature islets near the eastern horn of the encircling reef, the glassy surface of the sleeping lagoon was beginning to quiver and throb to the muffled call of the outer ocean; for the tide was about to turn, and soon the brimming waters would sink inch by inch, and foot by foot from the hard, white sand, and with strange swirlings and bubblings and mighty eddyings go tearing through the narrow passage at eight knots an hour.

Presently we heard a footfall upon the path which led to the boat-shed, and then an old man, naked but for his *titi*, or waist-girdle of grass, came out into the moonlight, and greeted us in a quavering, cracked voice.

"*Aue!* white man, my dear friend. So thou and Temana sit here in the moonlight!"

"Even so, Pâkía, most excellent and good old

man. Sit ye here beside us. Nay, not there, but here on mine own mat. So. Hast thy pipe with thee?"

The ancient chuckled, and his wrinkled old face beamed as he untwisted a black and stumpy clay from his perforated and pendulous ear-lobe, which hung full down upon his shoulder, and, turning it upside down, tapped the palm of his left hand with it.

"See!" he said, with another wheezing, half-whispered, half-strangled laugh, "see and hear the emptiness thereof! Nothing has been in its belly since cockcrow. And until now have I hungered for a smoke. Twice did I think to come to thee to-day and ask thee for *kaitalafu* (credit) for five sticks of tobacco, but I said to my pipe, 'Nay, let us wait till night time.' For see, friend of my heart, there are ever greedy eyes which watch the coming and going of a poor old man; and had I gotten the good God-given tobacco from thee by daylight, friends would arise all around me as I passed through the village to my house. And then, lo, the five sticks would become but one!"

"Pâkía," I said in English, as I gave him a piece of tobacco and my knife, "you are a philosopher."

He stopped suddenly, and placing one hand on my knee, looked wistfully into my face, as an inquiring child looks into the eyes of its mother.

"Tell me, what is that?"

I tried to find a synonym. "It means that you are a *tagata poto*—a wise man."

The old, brown, bald head nodded, and the dark, merry eyes danced.

"Aye, aye. Old I may be, and useless, but I have lived—I have lived. And though when I am dead my children and grandchildren will make a *tagi* over me, I shall laugh, for I know that of one hundred tears, ninety and nine will be for the tobacco and the biscuit and the rice that with me will vanish!"

He filled and lit his pipe, and then, raising one skinny, tattooed arm, pointed to the moon.

"Hast such a moon as that in *papalagi* land?"

"Sometimes."

"Aye, sometimes. But not always. No, not always. I know, I know. See, my friend; let us talk. I am full of talk to-night. You are a good man, and I, old Pâkía, have seen many things. Aye, many things and many lands. Aye, I, who am now old and toothless, and without oil in my knees and my elbows, can talk to you in two tongues besides my own. . . . Temana!"

"*Oi*, good father Pâkía."

"Go away. The white man and I would talk."

I placed my hand on the bald head of the ancient. "Temana shall go to the house and bring us a bottle of grog. We will drink, and

then you shall talk. I am one who would learn."

The old man took my hand and patted it. "Yes, let us talk to-night. And let us drink grog. Grog is good to drink, sometimes. Sometimes it is bad to drink. It is bad to drink when the swift blood of youth is in our veins and a hot word calls to a sharp knife. Ah! I have seen it! Listen! Dost hear the rush of the lagoon waters through the passage? That is the quick, hot blood of youth, when it is stirred by grog and passion, and the soft touch of a woman's bosom. I know it. I know it. But let Temana bring the bottle. I am not afraid to drink grog with *thee*. Ah, thou art not like some white men. Thou can'st drink, and give some to a poor old man, and if prying eyes and babbling tongues make mischief, and the missionary sends thee a *tusi* (letter), and says 'This drinking of grog by Pâkía is wrong,' thou sendest him a letter, saying, 'True, O teacher of the Gospel. This drinking of grog is very wrong. Wherefore do I send thee three dollars for the school, and ask thy mercy for old Pâkía, who was my guest.'"

I slapped the ancient on his withered old back.

"To-night ye shall drink as much grog as ye like, Pâkía. The missionary is a good man, and will not heed foolish talk."

Pâkía shook his head. "Mareko is a Samoan.

He thinketh much of himself because he hath been to Sini (Sydney) and stood before many white gentlemen and ladies, and told them about these islands. He is a vain fool, though a great man here in Nukufetau, but in Livapoola[1] he would be but as a pig. Livapoola is a very beautiful place, full of beautiful women. Ah! you laugh. . . . I am bent and old now, and my bones rattle under my skin like pebbles in a gourd. Then I was young and strong. Listen! I was a boat-steerer for three years on a London whaleship. I have fought in the wars of Chile and Peru. I can tell you many things, and you will understand. . . . I have seen many lands."

Temana returned with a bottle of brandy, a gourd of water, and three cups.

"Drink this, Pâkía, *taka ta-ina.*[2] And talk. Your talk is good to hear. And I can understand."

He drank the liquor neat, and then washed it down with a cupful of water.

"*Tāpa!* Ah, the good, sweet grog! And see, above us is the round moon, and here be we three. We three—two young and strong, one whose blood is getting cold. Ah, I will talk, and this boy, Temana, will learn that Pâkía is no boasting old liar, but a true man." Then, suddenly dropping the Nukufetau dialect in which he had hitherto spoken, he said quietly in English—

[1] Liverpool. [2] Lit., dear crony.

"I told you I could speak other languages beside my own. It is true, for I can talk English and Spanish." Then he went back into native: "But I am not a vain old man. These people here are fools. They think that because on Sundays they dress like white men and go to church five times in one day, and can read and write in Samoan, that they are as clever as white men. Bah! they are fools, fools! Where are the strong men of my youth? Where are the thousand and two hundred people who, when my father was a boy, lived upon the shores of this lagoon? They are gone, gone!"

"True, Pâkía. They are gone."

"Aye, they are perished like the dead leaves. And once when I said in the hearing of the *kaupule* (head men) that in the days of the *po-uri* (heathen times) we were a great people and better off than we are now, I was beaten by my own grand-daughter, and fined ten dollars for speaking of such things, and made to work on the road for two months. But it is true—it is true. Where are the people now? They are dead, perished; there are now but three hundred left of the thousand and two hundred who lived in my father's time. And of those that are left, what are they? They are weak and eaten up with strange diseases. The men cannot hunt and fish as men hunted and fished in my father's time.

Tah! they are women, and the women are men, for now the man must work for the woman, so that she can buy hats and boots and calicoes, and dress like a white woman. Give me more grog, for these things fill my belly with bitterness, and the grog is sweet. Ah! I shall tell you many things to-night."

"Tell me of them, old man. See, the moon is warm to our skins. And as we drink, we shall eat. Temana here shall bring us food. And we shall talk till the sun shines over the tops of the trees on Motu Luga. I would learn of the old times before this island became *lotu* (Christianised)."

"*Oi.* I will tell you. I am now but as an old, upturned canoe that is used for a sitting-place for children who play on the beach at night. And I am called a fool and a bad man, because I sometimes speak of the days that are dead. Temana, is Malepa thy wife virtuous?"

"*Se kau iloà*" ("I do not know"), replied Temana, with a solemn face.

"Ah, you cannot tell! Who can tell nowadays? But you will know when some day she is fined five dollars. In my time if a man doubted his wife, the club fell swiftly, or the spear was sped, and she was dead. And, because of this custom, wives in those days were careful. Now, they care not, and are fined five dollars many times. And

the husband hath to pay the fine!" He laughed in his noiseless way, and then puffed at his pipe. "And if he cannot pay, then he and his wife, and the man who hath wronged him, work together on the roads, and eat and drink together as friends, and are not ashamed. And at night-time they sing hymns together!"

"People must be punished when wrong is done, Pâkía," I said lamely.

"Bah! what is five dollars to a woman? Is it a high fence set with spears over which she cannot climb? If a man hath fifty dollars, does not his wife know it, and tell her lover (if she hath one) that he may meet her ten times! Give me more water in this grog, good white man with the brown skin like mine own!"

The old fellow smoked his pipe in silence for a few minutes; then again he pointed to the moon, nodded and smiled.

"*Tah!* What a moon! Would that I were young again! See, in the days of my youth, on such a night as this, all the young men and women would be standing on the outer reef fishing for *malau*, which do but take a bait in the moonlight. *Now*, because to-morrow is the Sabbath day, no man must launch a canoe nor take a rod in his hand, lest he stay out beyond the hour of midnight, and his soul go to hell to burn in red fire for ever and ever. Bah!"

"Never mind these things, Pâkía. Tell me instead how came ye to serve in the wars of Chile and Peru, or of thy voyages in the *folau manu* (whaleship)."

His eyes sparkled. "Ah, those were the days! Twice in one whaleship did I sail among the ice mountains of the far south, where the wind cuts like a knife and the sea is black to look at. *Tāpa!* the cold, the cold, the cold which burneth the skin like iron at white heat! But I was strong; and we killed many whales. I, Pâkía, in one voyage struck thirteen! I was in the mate's boat. . . . Look at this now!" He held up his withered arm and peered at me. "It was a strong arm then; now it is but good to carry food to my mouth, or to hold a stick when I walk." The last words he uttered wistfully, and then sighed.

"The mate of that ship was a good man. He taught me many things. Once, when we had left the cold seas and were among the islands of Tonga, he struck me in his rage because I threw the harpoon at a great sperm whale, and missed. That night I slipped over the side, and swam five miles to the land. Dost know the place called Lifuka? 'Twas there I landed. I lay in a thicket till daylight, then I arose and went into a house and asked for food. They gave me a yam and a piece of bonito, and as I ate men sprang on me

from behind and tied me up hand and foot. Then I was carried back to the ship, and the captain gave those pigs of Tongans fifty dollars' worth of presents for bringing me back."

"He thought well of thee, Pâkía, to pay so much."

He nodded.

"Aye, for I was a good man, and worth much to him. And I was not flogged, for the mate was my friend always. All the voyage I was a lucky man, till we came to a place called Amboyna. Here the mate became sick and died, so I ran away. This time I was not caught, and when the ship was gone, I was given work by an Englishman. He was a rich merchant—not a poor trader like thee. He had a great house, many servants, and many native wives. Thou hast but two servants, and no wife. Why have ye no wife? It is not proper!"

I expressed my deep sense of the insignificance of my domestic arrangements, and gave him another nip of brandy.

"But, like him, thou hast a big heart. May you live long and become a *mau koloa* (rich man). Ah! the grog, the good grog. I am young again to-night. . . . And so for two years I lived at Amboyna. Then my master went to Peretania—to Livapoola—and took me with him. I was his servant, and he trusted me and made much of me.

*

Ah, Livapoola is a fine place. I was six months there, and wherever my master went I went with him. By and by he married, and we went to live at a place by the sea, in a fair white house of stone, with rich lands encompassing it. It was a foreign place, and we crossed the sea to go there. There were many women servants there, and one of them, named Lissi, began to smile at, and then to talk to me. I gave her many presents, for every week my master put a gold piece in my hand. One day I asked him to give me this girl for my wife. He laughed, and said I was foolish; that she was playing with me. I told her this. She swore to me that when I had fifty gold pieces she would be my wife, but that I must tell no one. . . . Ah! how a woman can fool a man! I was fooled. And every gold piece I got I gave to her to keep for me.

"I have said that there were many servants. There was one young man, named Harry, whose work it was to take my master about in his *puha tia tia* (carriage). Sometimes I would see him talking to the girl, and then looking at me. Then I began to watch; but she was too cunning. Always had she one word for me. 'Be patient; when we have the fifty gold pieces all shall be well. We shall go away from here, and get married.'

"One night, as I lay upon the grass smoking

my pipe, I heard voices, the voices of the man Harry and Lissi. They were speaking of me. They spoke loudly, and I heard all that was said. 'He is but a simple fool,' she said, with a laugh; 'but in another month I shall have the last of his money, and then thou and I shall go away quietly. Faugh! the tattooed beast!' and I heard her laugh again, and the man laughed with her, but bade her be careful lest I should suspect."

"She was a bad woman, Pâkía," I began, when he interrupted me with a quick gesture.

"I crept back into the house and got a knife, and waited. The night was dark, but I could see. Presently they came along a narrow path which led to the house. Then I sprang out, and drove my knife twice into the man's chest. I had not time to kill the woman, for at the third blow the knife broke off at the hilt, and she fled in the darkness. I wanted to kill her because she had fooled me and taken my money—forty-six gold pieces.

"There was a great wood which ran from my master's house down to the sea. I ran hard, very hard, till I came to the water. I could see ships in the harbour, quite near. I swam to one, and tried to creep on deck and hide, but heard the sailors talking. Presently I saw a vessel—a schooner—come sailing slowly past. There was a boat towing astern. I swam softly over, and got

into the boat, and laid down till it was near the dawn. There was but little wind then, and the ship was not moving fast, so I got into the water again, and held on to the side of the boat, and began to cry out in a loud voice for help. As soon as they heard me the ship was brought to the wind, and I got back into the boat. I was taken on board and given food and coffee, and told the captain that I had fallen overboard from another ship, and had been swimming for many hours. Only the captain could speak a little English—all the others were Italians. It was an Italian ship.

"I was a long time on that ship. We went first to Rio, then down to the cold seas of the south, and then to Callao. But the captain never gave me any money, so I ran away. Why should a man work for naught? By and by an American whaleship came to Callao, and I went on board. I was put in the captain's boat. We sailed about a long time, but saw no whales, so when the ship came to Juan Fernandez I and a white sailor named Bob ran away, and hid in the woods till the ship was gone. Then we came out and went to the Governor, who set us to work to cut timber for the whaleships. Hast been to this island?"

"No," I replied; "'tis a fair land, I have heard."

"Aye, a fair, fair land, with green woods and sweet waters; and the note of the blue pigeon soundeth from dawn till dark, and the wild goats leap from crag to crag."

"Didst stay there long, Pâkía?"

He rubbed his scanty white beard meditatively. "A year—two years—I cannot tell. Time goes on and on, and the young do not count the days. But there came a ship which wanted men. and I sailed away to Niu Silani.[1] That, too, is a fair land, and the men of the country have brown skins like us, and I soon learnt their tongue, which is akin to ours. I was a long time in that ship, for we kept about the coast, and the Maoris filled her with logs of *kauri* wood, to take to Sydney. It was a good ship, for although we were paid no money every man had as much rum as he could drink and as much tobacco as he could smoke, and a young Maori girl for wife, who lived on board. Once the Maoris tried to take the ship as she lay at anchor, but we shot ten or more. Then we went to Sydney, where I was put in prison for many weeks."

"Why was that?"

"I do not know. It was, I think, because of something the captain had done when he was in Sydney before; he had taken away two men and a woman who were prisoners of the Governor. I

[1] New Zealand.

had seen them on board at Juan Fernandez; they went ashore there to live. But the Governor of Sydney was good to me. I was brought before him; he asked me many questions about these islands, and gave me some silver money. Then the next day I was put on board a ship, which took me to Tahiti. But see, dear friend, I cannot talk more to-night, though my tongue is loose and my belly warm with the good grog. But it is strong, very strong, and I fear to drink more, lest I disgust thee and lose thy friendship."

"Nay, old man. Have no fear of that. And see, sleep here with us till the dawn. Temana shall bring thee a covering-mat."

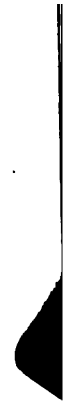
"Ah-h-h! Thou art good to old Pâkía. I shall stay till the dawn. It is good to have such a friend. To-morrow, if I weary thee not, I shall tell thee of how I returned to Chile and fought with the English ship-captain in the war, and of the woman he loved, and of the great fire which burnt two thousand women in a church."

"*Tah!*" said Temana incredulously; "two thousand?"

"Aye!" he snapped angrily, "dost think I be drunk, boy? Go and watch thy wife. How should an ignorant hog like thee know of such things?"

"'Sh, 'sh, old man. Be not so quick to anger.

Temana meant no harm. Here is thy covering-mat. Lie down and sleep."

He smiled good-naturedly at us, and then, pulling the mat over him to shield his aged frame from the heavy morning dew, was soon asleep.

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